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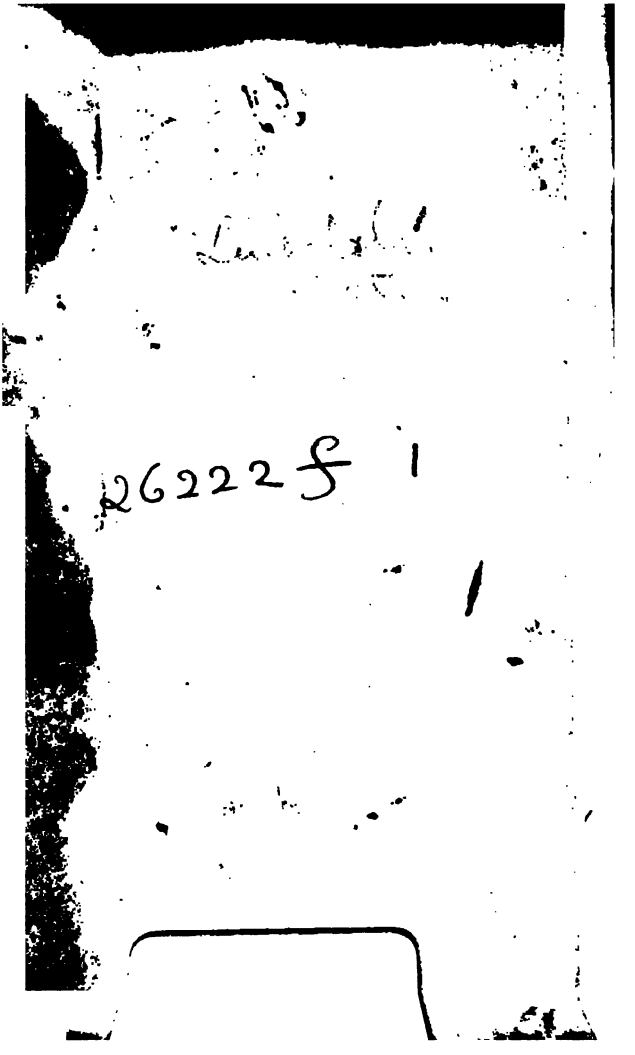
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A

DISSERTATION

On Reading the

CLASSICS,

And Forming a

JUST STYLE.

Written in the Year 1709.

And addreſſed to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN Lord *ROOS*,

The preſent

Marquis of *GRANBY*.

By *HENRY FELTON*, D.D.
Rector of *Whitwell* in *Derbyſhire*.

The Third Edition corrected.

LONDON:

Printed for JONAH BOWYER, at the *Roſe* in *Ludgate-ſtreet*. 1718.

THE PREFACE.

THE following Sheets were the Product of ſome leiſure Hours in the Country about three or four Years ago. They were written in the Year 1709, and not tranſcribed till the latter End of the next Summer, as the Reader will find by ſeveral Paſſages up and down, which will clear the Time, and ſave the Critics the Trouble of making any Miſtakes in their Conjectures. For Want of ſuch Informations, or from the Loſs of them, Learned Men have been at a World of Pains in ſettling the Date of many exce[l]

lent Pieces, and have differed vaſtly from one another, not only in a Day, or a Month, but even in a Year, nay ſometimes in two or three. But I have always obſerved, that they diſagree moſt, where they differ leaſt; the nearer they come to one another, the cloſer is the Engagement; and the Critical War is always hotteſt, when there is nothing between them.

I hope the Readers will be ſo candid, as not to expect what they do not find, for I am very ſenſible from the better Judgment of Mankind, that they will be under a ſtrange Temptation to blame ſuch a Work as this, for laying down Rules without giving Examples; and I muſt own, it does not ſeem

eaſy for me to excuſe ſo great an Omiſſion, when I might at once, with the Trouble only of Tranſcribing, have enlarged the Book, adorned the Work, and diverted the courteous Reader.

But, perhaps, I had a Mind to be the firſt Modern that ever compoſed a Piece of this Nature without the Pomp of Quotations; and ſince I did not ſee the Neceſſity of it, I was willing to avoid all Oſtentation of Learning. Tully *is very ſparing in Quotations. Moſt that he uſeth are to ſhow the Force and Varyings of Action and Elocution, rather than the Rules of Writing, except when he quotes himſelf, which is next to not quoting at all, and the worſt Way of producing Examples in the World.*

Ariſtotle's *Way is dry and formal*; *and* Longinus, *who hath recorded ſome of the moſt beautiful Paſſages of the* Greek *Authors in his Treatiſe of Sublime, could not have been underſtood without them. I have dwell'd only in general Rules, without deſcending into the Provinces of the Grammarian and Rhetorician, and perhaps if any body is pleaſed to try, he will hardly find it practicable to illuſtrate theſe Rules by Examples.*

The Rules I have given, are the Reſult of a thouſand others, the Abſtract and Eſſence of Grammar, Rhetorick and Logick; and the Examples of a perfect Style are to be taken from the beſt Authors in general, not from any ſeparate Quotations.

tions. Tully *and* Quintilian *do frequently commend the illuſtrious Writers they mention for their ſeveral Excellencies, and propoſe them as Standards in general for the ſeveral Ways of Writing they were diſtinguiſhed in; but they never deſcend to Particulars, nor ſupport their Opinions by formal Citations. For that they referr themſelves to every Man's Taſte and Judgment.*

If we conſider others, who have delivered any Rules of Writing, we ſhall find, the Examples they produce, are in minuter Matters to explain the Terms and Signification of the lower Rules, which relate to Grammar and Rhetoric, to the Art and Mechaniſm of

Writing. But where they treat in generals, as I have done, they never illuſtrate their Rules by Examples. Quintilian's *Inſtitution is full of Quotations, for the firſt nine Books in which he treats his Subject as a Rhetorician; but in the three laſt, eſpecially the twelfth, where he riſes from Particulars to more general Conſiderations, we hardly have one Citation; and the ſame may be obſerved of* Tully *in his general Rules of Oratory. No body produces Examples of conſiſtent Writers by particular Quotations, and the ſeveral Rules I have given for the Idiom, Purity, Plainneſs, and Decorations of Speech,* &c. *cannot be farther illuſtrated by any Paſſages from*

from Authors; for we have natural Notions of theſe Things, and can only ſet them off by ſhowing the ſeveral Ways of offending againſt them.

Rules ſpeak themſelves; they draw the Picture of Nature, and give us ſure Criterions *of an Original in every Performance. I am very certain, the World had ſeen the faireſt Draughts before any ſettled Rules were given; and perhaps the Works of the Learned have been more formal, but not more correct, ſince Men wrote according to Art. For thoſe who firſt preſcribed the Rules of Writing, did not take Nature ſtripped and naked for their Copy; but they looked upon her, as ſhe was dreſſed and adorned by her Ado-*

rers: They took off indeed all falſe Colours, but allowed her a little Paint, and were content ſhe ſhould be ſet out like any Lady, provided her Dreſſes did not ſpoil her native Beauty. They formed their Rules upon the Model of the beſt Writers; they were ſo artful as to conceal their Art, and while they ſeemed to preſcribe to others, they were only Copiers themſelves. But after they had fixed the Standard, they were ſure every Writer would be brought to their Bar; and as the firſt admirable Copies of Nature gave them a Foundation for their Rules, they knew every good Genius *would write and judge by Nature, whether any Rules had been ſet or no. And perhaps,*

(*for*

(for I love to doubt in Matters of ſo hazardous Conjecture) if the Rules had not been given, we had been troubled with many fewer Writers; for then thoſe who had not Nature for their Rule, could have had no Rule at all. But now how many Scribblers are there, who obſerve the Rule and neglect the Meaning? and what Number of Pedants do we meet with, that keep to the Letter, and loſe the Spirit?

I won't pretend to anſwer my Want of Method, perhaps I have obſerved it, tho' I ſeem to neglect it. Nor ſhall I need any Apology for the Style and Manner I have uſed, which the grave Critics will cenſure as too light and ju-

Genile for one of my Profeſſion. But I was not writing to myſelf, nor to the grave and learned, but to a young Nobleman of ſprightly Parts, and a lively Imagination. My Buſineſs was to engage his Attention, and give the Piece ſuch Colours, as would ſtrike his Fancy. And I am very glad, that while I wrote to a Youth, I could write ſomething like a Youth, only tempering the Briskneſs of Thought with the Sedateneſs of Judgment.

What I wiſhed might be performed by the fineſt Wits upon the ancient Authors, I have with inexpreſſible Pleaſure ſeen accompliſhed by the Admirable Critic upon Milton. *And if Mr.* Steele, *and his*

his Friends, would do the ſame Juſtice to Horace, Homer, *and* Virgil, *or any celebrated Names in Antiquity, we might hope to read them in a brighter Light, and peruſe Ten thouſand Glories, which lie covered under the Modern way of Illuſtration.*

Tully *who hath given us thoſe excellent Books of Orators, and Oratory, was himſelf the greateſt Orator. If* Horace *had not been an excellent Poet, he had never been an admirable Critic. The beſt Performers are the beſt Judges in every Art, and the ingenious Author of the* Eſſay upon Criticiſm *demonſtrates the Juſtneſs of his Remarks, by the Goodneſs of his Writing. The true Spirit of Criticiſm ſeems*

to

to revive. My Lord Roſcommon, *and the preſent, with the late Duke of* Bucks, *opened the Scene in King* Charles *the Second's Time, but it ſoon cloſed again. And nothing was done but in a dry, formal Way, except by* Dryden, *who at once gave the beſt Rules, and broke them in ſpight of his own Knowledge, and the* Rehearſal. *His Prefaces are many of them admirable upon Dramatick Writing; he had ſome peculiar Notions, which he maintains with great Addreſs; but his Judgment in diſputed Points is of leſs Weight and Value, becauſe the Inconſtancy of his Temper did run into his Thoughts, and mixed with the Conduct of his Writings, as well as his Life.*

The preſent Age ſeemeth to be born for carrying Criticiſm to its higheſt Pitch and Perfection. We have ſeen many admirable Pieces in the ſingle Papers, which have been publiſh'd of late Years, preferable to Volumes of Your ſtanch, formal Critics. Many ingenious Hands have concurred to reſcue it from Pedantry, Dulneſs, and Ill-Nature. It is no longer a dry, ſour, verbal Study, but claimeth a Place among the politeſt Parts of Learning: A Critic ſhould lift up his Head with an eaſy, chearful Air, and not be diſtinguiſhed, as the Tribe hath generally been, by the Wrinkles of his Brows, but as Men of Candor and Ingenuity ought to be, by the Good-Nature.

ture, Freedom, and Openneſs of his Countenance. Critics are apt to talk in a ſupercilious, magiſterial Way, to obtrude their Sentiments on the World, and maintain every ſingular Opinion with Stiffneſs and Ill Manners. But if they would ſoften the Rigor of their Pen, and offer their Notions in a modeſt affable Addreſs, their Civility and Complaiſance would take off thoſe Prejudices, with which Pride and Poſitiveneſs are generally entertained. The late Edition of Horace *is the fineſt and greateſt Piece of Criticiſm, that was ever written on any Claſſic; and if the moſt learned Doctor had been a more popular Writer, the World I believe would have admired*

admired ſeveral Paſſages they endeavour to explode: And more Texts had been acknowledged admirably reſtored, if ſome had not been magiſterially obtruded.

What a polite Critic may do if he pleaſes, and in how different an Aſpect Criticiſm appears, when formed by Men of Parts and Fire, *we may ſee in Mr.* Trapp's Prælectiones Poeticæ. *A Work that cannot be enough commended, whether we conſider the Curiouſneſs of his Obſervations, the Juſtneſs of his Remarks, the Truth and Importance of his Rules, the Aptneſs and Beauty of his Examples, the Force and Elegance of his Style, and the Penetration of his Wit and Judgment: A Piece*

in ſuch Perfection of Beauty, that he gives the Rules with the ſame Spirit we find in the Examples, and maketh thoſe Diſſertations, which in heavy formal Hands would have looked crabbed, dull, and dry, ſhine in all the Graces that Life, and Eaſe, and Vigor can adorn them with; we ſee how entertaining the ſevereſt Criticiſms are in a Poet's Hand, and what Life and Spirit he can give to the dryeſt Part of his Subject, while he preſcribes the Rules and fixes the Laws of Poetic Diction, weigheth the Importance of Words, and conſiders the ſeveral Ways of Expreſſion peculiar to the Poets. And if Men of ſuch Learning, and ſuch Parts, would undertake

this

this Province, I cannot help repeating it, we ſhould ſee more and more into the Property, Strength, and Compaſs, and all the hidden Beauties of the Greek *and* Latin *Tongues.*

Since the firſt Edition of this Book, Mr. Trapp's *Second Volume of his* Prælectiones *hath been publiſh'd; but after having ſaid ſo much of the Former, I will only add, that this Second maketh me long for the Third.*

What Advantages our Language may receive, when thoſe will take upon them to reform it, who are the beſt Writers in it, we may partly conceive from the new Propoſal for aſcertaining *the* Britiſh *Tongue, and fixing the* Standard *of it.*

And

And whenever a Work of that Public Spirit ſhall be undertaken, and ſupported by the greateſt and ableſt Hands in the Kingdom, I will promiſe myſelf to ſee our Language rival the Strength and Eloquence of the Roman *Diction.*

If I had ſeen my Lord Lanſdowne's *Poems in one View, I might have formed a juſter Idea of the Greatneſs of his Genius, and the Delicacy of his Wit. For when I wrote theſe Sheets, they lay diſperſed up and down in the Miſcellanies; but ſome kind Hand hath aſſembled the ſcattered Stars, and added another Lyre to the Conſtellations.*

Perhaps,

Perhaps, the Characters I have drawn of our moſt celebrated Poets, Hiſtorians and Divines, will not be agreed in by all; and therefore, ſo various is the Judgment of Mankind, I ſuffer'd that Piece to go with ſome Reluctance. All I can ſay for myſelf is, that I have conſider'd very carefully the Diſtinction of their Characters; and if I am not miſtaken in that, I am ſure I have ſaid no more of them, than they deſerve.

If I have advanced any ſingular Opinions, I ſhall be ready either to give them up, or give my Reaſons for them; for, however I may differ in my Notions from the Herd of Critics and Commentators, I ſhall always be ambitious to think with

the

the Politer, and more Candid Part of Mankind.

The Additions muſt anſwer for themſelves, for I don't care to enlarge this Preface any more.

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My Lord,

I CAN hardly prevail with myſelf to give Your Lordſhip this Trouble, without making an Apology for it in the Entrance, and begging Your Lordſhip's Pardon for intruding without Leave, and offering You a Preſent before I am ſure of Your Acceptance. I might be very large upon the Importance and Advantages of Education, and ſay a great

many Things which have been ſaid before; but that Point is ſo well conſidered by Your Lordſhip's moſt Noble Parents, that I need not ſay any Thing upon it; and Your Application to the excellent Methods taken for making a great, and a good Man, will anſwer, I am perſuaded, all the fair Expectations every body conceiveth of You, that knoweth You.

And therefore, as You want no Inſtructions ſuitable to Your Birth and Quality, I have rather choſen to preſent Your Lordſhip with ſome peculiar Thoughts, than to run a needleſs Treatiſe upon the Subject at length; and tho' what I ſay, is no doubt inculcated to Your Lordſhip by better Hands, yet Variety may engage Your Attention; and the ſame Precepts differently applyed will make the deeper Impreſſion, where Your Mind hath received the Cha-

Characters before, and is readier to admit a ſecond Stamp, when it is ſo well prepared by the firſt.

Your Lordſhip will at leaſt have the Advantage of ſeeing Things together; and Leiſure to weigh and conſider the Reaſonableneſs of what is recommended to You: And if I offer any Thing which is not commonly obſerved, I hope it will not be interpreted any Singularity, but ſuch, as may render Your Lordſhip more Eminent, and Diſtinguiſhed in the World.

The great Obligations I have to thoſe of Your Illuſtrious Family, incline me to make ſome Acknowledgment; and ſince I am not capable of doing it to them, I have choſen this Way to give Your Lordſhip a Token of the great Honour I have for the *Houſe* of RUTLAND; and if I am of any Service to Your Lordſhip, I ſhall gratify a particu-

lar Inclination of my own to ſerve You.

Your Lordſhip's Years begin to make You capable of Reflexion, and Your good Parts advancing far before Your Years, diſcover a ſolid Judgment joined with a quick Apprehenſion, which, if duly improved, will teach You to think right, and bring You to ſo juſt a Concluſion in all Emergencies, that to apprehend and determine will be but one Trouble; ſo vaſt an Advantage is a natural Penetration in an Underſtanding like Yours, when it comes to be exerciſed in Knowledge, and acquainted with the World.

I have obſerved, beſides the Readineſs of Parts, a Goodneſs of Nature, an excellent Diſpoſition of Mind derived to Your Lordſhip from the Parents of two Generations to whom I have the Honour to be known;

known; and thoſe excellent Seeds implanted in Your Birth, will, if cultivated, be moſt flouriſhing in Production; and as the Soil is good, and no Coſt nor Care wanting to improve it, we muſt entertain Hopes of the richeſt Harveſt: The Ear muſt be Admirable and Full, when the Blade is ſo Fair and Promiſing.

Your Birth is attended with peculiar Advantages of Title and Eſtate, of Worth and Goodneſs in Your Anceſtors and Parents: The Honour and Dignity of Your Family; the great Examples of Virtue in Your Progenitors for a long Deſcent; and the living, and more prevailing Example of Your moſt Illuſtrious Grand-Father and Father will fire a Soul like Yours to a generous Emulation; and, I hope, Your Lordſhip will *follow them with equal Steps, if You do not go beyond them.*

So ſelect a Conjunction of the happieſt Circumſtances muſt have a bleſſed Influence on the whole Courſe of Your Life; and if Families are the more Noble for being more Ancient, Your Lordſhip will ſhine in true Nobility, and reflect a Luſtre on all the long *Gallery* of Your Predeceſſors.

But, my Lord, the faireſt Diamonds are rough till they are poliſhed, and the pureſt Gold muſt be run and waſhed, and ſifted in the Ore. We are untaught by Nature, and the fineſt Qualities will grow wild and degenerate, if the Mind is not formed by Diſcipline, and cultivated with an early Care. In ſome Perſons, who have run up to Men without a Liberal Education, we may obſerve many great Qualities darken'd and eclips'd; their Minds are cruſted over like Diamonds in the Rock, they flaſh out ſome-

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times into an irregular Greatneſs of Thought, and betray in their Actions an unguided Force, and unmanaged Virtue; ſomething very Great and very Noble may be diſcerned, but it looketh cumberſome and awkard, and is alone of all Things the worſe for being Natural. Nature is undoubtedly the beſt Miſtreſs, and the apteſt Scholar, but Nature herſelf muſt be civilized, or ſhe will look ſavage, as ſhe appears in the *Indian* Princes, who are veſted with a native Majeſty, a ſurprizing Greatneſs and Generoſity of Soul, and diſcover what we always regret, Fine Parts, and excellent Natural Endowments without Improvement. In thoſe Countries, which we call *Barbarous*, where Art and Politeneſs are not underſtood, Nature hath the greater Advantage in this, that Simplicity of Manners often ſecureth the Innocence of the Mind; and as

Virtue is not, ſo neither is Vice civilized and refined: But in theſe *Politer* Parts of the World, where Virtue excelleth by Rules and Diſcipline, Vice alſo is more inſtructed, and with us good Qualities will not ſpring up alone: Many hurtful Weeds will riſe with them, and choak them in their Growth, unleſs removed by ſome skilful Hand; nor will the Mind be brought to a juſt Perfection, without cheriſhing every hopeful Seed, and repreſſing every ſuperfluous Humour: The Mind is like the Body in this Regard, which cannot fall into a decent and eaſy Carriage, unleſs it be faſhioned in Time: An untaught Behaviour is like the People that uſe it, truly ruſtic, forced, and uncouth, and Art muſt be applied to make it Natural.

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My Lord, the Neceſſity of Education is plain, but the Methods of it are in many Points ungrateful to Perſons of Your Lordſhip's Years. Sprightly Youth, and cloſe Application will hardly ſtand together: Long Attention to the ſame Thing is tedious to tender Minds; and 'tis difficult to fix the *Mercury*, and ſettle a brisk, lively Temper in a laborious plodding Track of Learning. This Your Parts are too delicate to admit of, and too ready to need: Your Lordſhip will always uſe Application enough to apprehend Things fully; and a ſhorter Attention, if it be cloſe, will maſter any Difficulty, that falls in Your way: I believe, You are of that generous Temper, ſo natural to Perſons of Your great Parts, to ſuffer no Difficulty to be too hard for You, and to maſter every Oppoſition, that would obſtruct Your Paſſage.

For, my Lord, 'tis in Knowledge as in War; Open Places are eaſily taken in, and Towns not ſtrongly fortified make but a weak Reſiſtance; but where Art and Nature conſpire to render any Fortreſs impregnable; it muſt be won by the moſt powerful Aſſaults, and nobleſt Reſolution. *Bruſſels* and *Louvain* are eaſy Conqueſts, they do not ſo much reſiſt, as admit the Victor; but if the Duke of *Marlborough*, or Prince *Eugene* had expected other Towns would have made them the ſame Compliments, *Liſle* had ſtill remained to the *French*, and *Mons* and *Tournay* might ſtill have been thought impregnable. 'Tis familiar to our Troops to beat an Army in plain Fight, and open Field; but when the Enemy lieth entrenched behind Lines, as ſtrong as Walls, the late bloody, and glorious Battle at the Woods of *Sart* and *Sanſart* will ſhow,

ſhow, that the laſt Degrees of Bravery and Reſolution, the moſt abſolute Points of Courage and Conduct are required to ſurmount ſuch inſuperable Difficulties, and return with Victory.

To leave this Digreſſion, my Lord, if I may call it ſo, Knowledge will not be won without Pains and Application: Some Parts of it are eaſier, ſome more difficult of Acceſs: We muſt proceed at once by Sap and Battery; and when the Breach is practicable, Your Lordſhip hath Nothing to do, but to preſs boldly on, and enter: It is troubleſome and deep Digging for pure Waters, but when once You come to the Spring, they riſe and meet You: The Entrance into Knowledge is oftentimes very Narrow, Dark, and Tireſome, but the Rooms are Spacious, and gloriouſly Furniſhed: The Country is admirable, and

every Proſpect entertaining. Your Lordſhip need not wonder, that fine Countries have ſtrait Avenues, when the Regions of Happineſs, like thoſe of Knowledge, are impervious, and ſhut to lazy Travellers, and the Way to Heaven itſelf is Narrow.

Common Things are eaſily attained, and no body valueth what lieth in every body's Way: What is Excellent is placed out of ordinary Reach, and Your Lordſhip will eaſily be perſuaded to put forth Your Hand to the utmoſt Stretch, and reach whatever You aſpire at.

Many are the Subjects, my Lord, which will invite and deſerve the ſteadieſt Application from thoſe who would excell, and be diſtinguiſhed in them. Humane Learning in general: Natural Philoſophy: Mathematicks, and the whole Circle of Science: But there is no Neceſſi-

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ty of leading You thro' theſe ſeveral Fields of Knowledge: It will be moſt Commendable for Your Lordſhip to gather ſome of the faireſt Fruit from them all, and to lay up a Store of good Senſe, and ſound Reaſon, of great Probity, and ſolid Virtue: This is the true Uſe of Knowledge, to make it ſubſervient to the great Duties of our moſt Holy Religion, that as You are daily grounded in the true and ſaving Knowledge of a Chriſtian, You may uſe the Helps of Humane Learning, and direct them to their proper End. Your Lordſhip will meet with great and wonderful Examples of an irregular and miſtaken Virtue in the *Greeks* and *Romans*, with many Inſtances of Greatneſs of Mind, of unſhaken Fidelity, Contempt of humane Grandeur, a moſt paſſionate Love of their Country, Prodigality of Life, Diſdain of Servitude, inviolable

lable Truth, and the moſt publick diſintereſted Souls, that ever threw off all Regards in Compariſon with their Country's Good; Your Lordſhip will diſcern the Flaws and Blemiſhes of their faireſt Actions, ſee the wrong Apprehenſions they had of Virtue, and be able to point them right, and keep them within their proper Bounds. Under this Correction You may extract a generous and noble Spirit from the Writings and Hiſtories of the Ancients. And I would in a particular Manner recommend the *Claſſic Authors* to Your Favour, and they will recommend themſelves to Your Approbation.

If Your Lordſhip would reſolve to maſter the *Greek* as well as the *Latin* Tongue, You will find that the one is the Source and Original of all that is moſt Excellent in the other; I do not mean ſo much for Expreſſion,

Expreſſion, as Thought, though ſome of the moſt beautiful Strokes of the *Latin* Tongue are drawn from the Lines of the *Grecian* Orators and Poets; but for Thought, and Fancy, for the very Foundation, and Embelliſhment of their Works, You will ſee, the *Latins* have ranſacked the *Grecian* Store, and, as *Horace* adviſes all, who would ſucceed in writing Well, had their Authors Night and Morning in their Hands.

And they have been ſuch happy Imitators, that the Copies have proved more exact than the Originals; and *Rome* hath triumphed over *Athens*, as well in Wit, as Arms; for tho' *Greece* may have the Honour of Invention, yet 'tis eaſier to ſtrike out a new Courſe of Thought, than to equal old Originals, and therefore it is more Honour to ſurpaſs, than to invent anew.

Verrio

Verrio is a great Man from his own Deſigns, but if he had attempted upon the *Cartons*, and outdone *Raphael Urbin* in Life and Colours, he had been acknowledged greater than that celebrated Maſter, but now we muſt think him leſs.

If I may detain Your Lordſhip with a ſhort Compariſon of the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors, I muſt needs own, the laſt have the Preference in my Thoughts, and I am not Singular in my Opinion. It muſt be confeſſed; the *Romans* have left no Tragedies behind them, that may compare with the Majeſty of the *Grecian* Stage; the beſt Comedies of *Rome* were written on the *Grecian* Plan, but *Menander* is too far loſt to be compared with *Terence*; only if we may judge by the Method *Terence* uſed in forming two *Greek* Plays into one, we ſhall naturally conclude, ſince his are perfect

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upon that Model, that they are more perfect than *Menander*'s were. I ſhall make no great Difficulty in preferring *Plautus* to *Ariſtophanes* for Wit and Humour, Variety of Characters, Plot and Contrivance in his Plays, tho' *Horace* hath cenſured him for Low Wit.

Virgil has been ſo often compared with *Homer*, and the Merits of thoſe Poets ſo often canvaſſed, that I ſhall only ſay, that if the *Roman* ſhines not in the *Grecian*'s Flame and Fire, 'tis the Coolneſs of his Judgment, rather than the Want of Heat. Your Lordſhip will generally find the Force of a Poet's Genius, and the Strength of his Fancy diſplay themſelves in the Deſcriptions they give of Battles, Storms, Prodigies, *&c.* and *Homer*'s Fire breaks out on theſe Occaſions in more Dread and Terror: But *Virgil* mixes Compaſſion with his Terror, and,

and, by throwing Water on the Flame, maketh it burn the brighter; ſo in the Storm; ſo in his Battles on the Fall of *Pallas* and *Camilla:* And that Scene of Horror, which his Hero opens in the ſecond Book: The Burning of *Troy:* The Ghoſt of *Hector:* The Murder of the King: The Maſſacre of the People: The ſudden Surprize, and the Dead of Night, are ſo relieved by the Piety and Pity that is every where intermix'd, that we forget our Fears, and join in the Lamentation. All the World acknowledgeth the *Æneid* to be moſt Perfect in its Kind; and conſidering the Diſadvantage of the Language, and the *Severity* of the *Roman Muſe*, the Poem is ſtill more Wonderful, ſince without the Liberty of the *Grecian* Poets, the Diction is ſo Great and Noble, ſo Clear, ſo Forcible and Expreſſive, ſo Chaſt and Pure, that even

even all the Strength and Compaſs of the *Greek* Tongue joined to *Homer*'s Fire cannot give us ſtronger and clearer Ideas, than the great *Virgil* hath ſet before our Eyes; ſome few Inſtances excepted, in which *Homer* thro' the Force of Genius hath excelled.

I have argued hitherto, my Lord, for *Virgil*, and it will be no Wonder, that his Poem ſhould be more correct in the Rules of Writing, if that ſtrange Opinion prevaileth, that *Homer* writ without any View or Deſign at all, that his Poems are looſe, independent Pieces tacked together, and were originally only ſo many *Songs* or *Ballads* upon the *Gods* and *Heroes*, and the *Siege* of *Troy*. If this be true, they are the completeſt String of Ballads I ever met with, and whoever collected them, and put them in the Method we now read them in, whether

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it were *Piſiſtratus*, or any other, hath placed them in ſuch Order, that the *Iliad* and the *Odyſſeïs* ſeem to have been compoſed with one View and Deſign, one Scheme and Intention, which are carried on from the Beginning to the End all along Uniform and Conſiſtent with themſelves. Some, my Lord, have argued the World was made by a wiſe Being, and not jumbled together by Chance, from the very Abſurdity of ſuch a Suppoſition; and they have illuſtrated their Argument from the Impoſſibility, that ſuch a Poem, as *Homer*'s, and *Virgil*'s, ſhould riſe in ſuch beautiful Order out of Millions of Letters eternally ſhaken together; but this Argument is half ſpoiled, if we allow, that the Poems of *Homer*, in each of which appeareth one continued formed Deſign from one End to the other, were written in looſe

Scraps

Scraps on no ſettled premeditated Scheme. *Horace*, we are ſure, was of another Opinion, and ſo was *Virgil* too, who built his *Æneid* upon the Model of the *Iliad*, and the *Odyſſeïs*: After all, *Tully*, whoſe Relation of this Paſſage hath given ſome Colour to this Suggeſtion, ſayeth no more, than that *Piſiſtratus*, whom he commendeth for his Learning, and condemneth for his Tyranny, obſerving the Books of *Homer* to lie confuſed and out of Order, placed them in the Method the great Author, no doubt, had firſt formed them in: But all this *Tully* giveth us only as Report. And it would be very ſtrange, that *Ariſtotle* ſhould form his Rules on *Homer*'s Poems; that *Horace* ſhould follow his Example, and propoſe *Homer* for the Standard of *Epic* Writing, with this bright Teſtimony, that he *never undertook any Thing inconſiderately, nor ever made any fooliſh Attempts*;

if indeed this celebrated Poet did not intend to form his Poems in the Order and Deſign we ſee them in: If we look upon the Fabrick and Conſtruction of thoſe great Works, we ſhall find an admirable Proportion in all the Parts, a perpetual Coincidence, and Dependence of one upon another; I will venture an Appeal to any learned Critic in this Cauſe; and if it be a ſufficient Reaſon to alter the common Readings in a Letter, a Word, or a Phraſe, from the Conſideration of the Context, or Propriety of the Language, and call it the Reſtoring of the Text, is it not a Demonſtration that theſe Poems were made in the ſame Courſe of Lines, and upon the ſame Plan we read them in at preſent, from all the Arguments, that Connexion, Dependence and Regularity can give us? If thoſe Critics, who maintain this

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odd Fancy of *Homer*'s Writings, had found them looſe, and undigeſted, and reſtored them to the Order they ſtand in now, I believe they would have gloried in their Art, and maintained it with more unconteſted Reaſons, than they are able to bring for the Diſcovery of a Word, or a Syllable hitherto falſly printed in the Text of any Author. But, my Lord, if any learned Men of ſingular Fancies and Opinions will not allow theſe Buildings to have been originally deſigned after the preſent Model, let them at leaſt allow us one Poetical Suppoſition on our ſide, That *Homer*'s Harp was as powerful to command his ſcattered incoherent Pieces into the beautiful Structure of a Poem, as *Amphion*'s was to ſummon the Stones into a Wall, or *Orpheus*'s to lead the Trees a Dance. For certainly, however it happeneth, the

Parts

Parts are ſo juſtly diſpoſed, that You cannot change any Book into the Place of another, without ſpoiling the Proportion, and confounding the Order of the Whole.

The *Georgicks* are above all Controverſy with *Heſiod*; but the *Idylliums* of *Theocritus* have ſomething ſo inimitably Sweet in the Verſe and Thoughts, ſuch a native Simplicity, and are ſo genuine, ſo natural a Reſult of the Rural Life, that I muſt, in my poor Judgment, allow him the Honour of the *Paſtoral*.

In *Lyricks* the *Grecians* may ſeem to have excelled, as undoubtedly they are ſuperiour in the Number of their Poets, and Variety of their Verſe. *Orpheus*, *Alcæus*, *Sappho*, *Simonides* and *Steſichorus* are almoſt entirely loſt: Here and there a Fragment of ſome of them is remaining, which, like ſome broken Parts

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of ancient Statues, preſerve an imperfect Monument of the Delicacy, ſtrength, and Skill of the great Maſter's Hand.

Pindar is ſublime, but obſcure, impetuous in his Courſe, and unfashionable in the Depth and Loftineſs of his Thoughts: *Anacreon* loweth ſoft and eaſy, every where diffuſing the Joy and Indolence of *his* Mind thro' *his* Verſe, and tuning his Harp to the ſmooth, and pleaſant Temper of his Soul: *Horace* alone may be compared to both, in whom are reconciled the Loftineſs and Majeſty of *Pindar*, and the gay, careleſs, jovial Temper of *Anacreon:* And, I ſuppoſe, however *Pindar* may be admired for Greatneſs, and *Anacreon* for Delicateneſs of Thought; *Horace*, who rivals one in his Triumphs, and the other in his Mirth and Love, ſurpaſſeth them both in Juſtneſs, Elegance, and Happineſs

pineſs of Expreſſion. *Anacreon* hath another Follower among the choiceſt Wits of *Rome*, and that is *Catullus*, whom, tho' his Lines be Rough, and his Numbers Inharmonious, I could recommend for the Softneſs and Delicacy, but muſt decline for the Looſeneſs of his Thoughts, too immodeſt for chaſte Ears to bear.

I will go no farther in the Poets, only for the Honour of our Country, let me obſerve to Your Lordſhip, that while *Rome* hath been contented to produce ſome ſingle Rivals to the *Grecian* Poetry, *England* hath brought forth the wonderful *Cowley*'s Wit, who was beloved by every Muſe he courted, and hath rivalled the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets in every Kind, but Tragedy.

I will not trouble Your Lordſhip with the Hiſtorians any farther, than to inform You, that the Conteſt

teſt lieth chiefly between *Thucydides* and *Salluſt*, *Herodotus* and *Livy*, though I think *Thucydides* and *Livy* may on many Accounts more juſtly be compared: The Critics have been very free in their Cenſures, but I ſhall be glad to ſuſpend any farther Judgment, till Your Lordſhip ſhall be able to read them, and give me Your Opinion.

Oratory and Philoſophy are the next diſputed Prizes; and whatever Praiſes may be juſtly given to *Ariſtotle*, *Plato*, *Xenophon*, and *Demoſthenes*, I will venture to ſay, that the divine *Tully* is all the *Grecian* Orators and Philoſophers in One.

And now, my Lord, having poſſibly given You ſome Prejudice in Favour of the *Romans*, I muſt beg Leave to aſſure You, that if You have not Leiſure to maſter Both, You will find Your Pains well re-

warded in the *Latin* Tongue; when once You enter into the Elegancies, and Beauties of it. 'Tis the peculiar Felicity of that Language to ſpeak good Senſe in ſuitable Expreſſions; to give the fineſt Thoughts in the happieſt Words, and in an eaſy Majeſty of Style, to write up to the Subject. "And in this, my "Lord, lieth the great Secret "of writing Well. It is that ele-"gant Simplicity, that ornamental "Plainneſs of Speech, which every "common Genius thinketh ſo "plain, that any body may reach "it, and findeth ſo very Elegant, "that all his Sweat, and Pains, "and Study, fail him in the At-"tempt.

In reading the excellent Authors of the *Roman* Tongue, whether You converſe with *Poets*, *Orators*, or *Hiſtorians*, Your Lordſhip will meet with all that is admirable in Humane

Humane Compoſure: And tho' Life, and Spirit, Propriety, and Force of Style, be common to them all, You will ſee, that nevertheleſs every Writer ſhineth in his peculiar Excellencies; and that Wit, like Beauty, is diverſified into a Thouſand Graces of Feature and Complexion.

I need not trouble Your Lordſhip with a particular Character of theſe celebrated Writers. What I have ſaid already, and what I ſhall ſay farther of them as I go along, render it leſs neceſſary at preſent; and I would not pre-engage Your Lordſhip's Opinion implicitly to my Side. It will be a pleaſant Exerciſe of Your Judgment to diſtinguiſh them Yourſelf; and when Your Lordſhip and I ſhall be able to depart from the common received Opinions of the Critics and Commentators, I may take ſome other Oc-

caſion of laying them before Your Lordſhip, and ſubmitting what I ſhall then ſay of them to Your Lordſhip's Approbation.

In the mean time, I ſhall only give Your Lordſhip two or three Cautions, and Directions for Your reading them, which to ſome People will look a little odd, but with me they are of great Moment, and very neceſſary to be obſerved.

The firſt is, that Your Lordſhip would never be perſuaded into what they call *Common-Places*, which is a Way of taking an Author to Pieces, and ranging him under proper Heads, that You may readily find what he hath ſaid upon any Point, by conſulting an *Alphabet*. This Practice is of no Uſe but in Circumſtantials of Time and Place, Cuſtom, and Antiquity, and in ſuch Inſtances where Facts are to be remembred, not where the Brain is

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to be exerciſed. In theſe Caſes it is of great Uſe: It helpeth the Memory, and ſerveth to keep thoſe Things in a Sort of Order and Succeſſion. But, my Lord, *Common-Placing* the *Senſe* of an Author, is ſuch a ſtupid Undertaking, that, if I may be indulged in ſaying it, they *want Common Senſe* that practiſe it. What Heaps of this Rubbiſh have I ſeen! O the Pains and Labour to record what other People have ſaid, that is taken by thoſe, who have Nothing to ſay themſelves! Your Lordſhip may depend upon it, the Writings of theſe Men are never worth the Reading; the Fancy is cramp'd, the Invention ſpoiled, their Thoughts on every Thing are prevented, if they think at all; but 'tis the peculiar Happineſs of theſe *Collectors* of Senſe, that they can write without *Thinking*.

I do moſt readily agree, that all the bright ſparkling Thoughts of the *Ancients*; their fineſt Expreſſions, and nobleſt Sentiments, are to be met with in theſe *Tranſcribers*: But how wretchedly are they brought in, how miſerably put together! Indeed, my Lord, I can compare ſuch Productions to nothing but rich Pieces of Patch-work, ſewed together with Packthread.

When I ſee a beautiful Building of exact Order and Proportion taken down, and the different Materials laid together by themſelves, it putteth me in mind of theſe *Common-Place Men.* The Materials are certainly very good, but they underſtand not the Rules of Architecture ſo well, as to form them into juſt and maſterly Proportions any more: And yet how beautiful would they ſtand

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in another Model upon another Plan!

For, my Lord, we muſt confeſs the Truth: We can ſay nothing New, at leaſt we can ſay nothing Better, than hath been ſaid before; but we may nevertheleſs make what we ſay our *Own.* And this is done when we do not trouble ourſelves to remember in what Page, or what Book we have read ſuch a Paſſage; but it falleth in naturally with the Courſe of our own Thoughts, and taketh its Place in our Writings with as much Eaſe, and looketh with as good a Grace, as it appeared in Two Thouſand Years ago.

This, my Lord, is the beſt Way of remembring the *Ancient* Authors, when You *reliſh* their Way of Writing, enter into their *Thoughts*, and *imbibe* their *Senſe.* There is no need of tying ourſelves up to an

Imitation of any of them; much leſs to copy, or tranſcribe them. For there is Room for vaſt Variety of Thought and Style, as Nature is various in her Works, and is Nature ſtill. Good Authors, like the celebrated *Maſters* in the ſeveral *Schools* of *Painting*, are *Originals* in their *Way*, and *different* in their Manner. And when we can make the ſame Uſe of the *Romans* as they did of the *Grecians*, and habituate ourſelves to their way of Thinking, and Writing, we may be equal in Rank, tho' different from them all, and be eſteemed *Originals* as well as they.

And this is what I would have Your Lordſhip do: Mix and incorporate with thoſe ancient Streams; and tho' Your own Wit will be improved, and heightened by ſuch a ſtrong Infuſion, yet the Spirit, the Thought, the Fancy, the Expreſſion, which

which ſhall flow from Your Pen, will be entirely Your Own.

The next Direction I would give Your Lordſhip is, that You would *decline* the *Critical* Part of Learning as much as poſſible; for that will lead You inſenſibly from good Senſe, and good Language; and 'tis below a Perſon of Your Lordſhip's Parts and Quality to take Notice of it: I am not ignorant of its admirable Uſe in the World of Learning, nor would I betray Your Lordſhip into any Contempt of an Art, where a Man muſt be a great Man indeed to excell, as ſome amongſt us moſt eminently do. But, my Lord, I would warn Your Lordſhip againſt the Infection of the leſs, and lower Critics, who are capable of nothing but collating Manuſcripts, and are not able to aſcertain the Text, or bring You nearer to the Original; this is the Caſe of Your common Editors, but

meaſure true, but not eaſily remedied; and perhaps, after all the Exclamation of ſo much Time loſt in meer Words and Terms, the hopeful Youths, whoſe Loſs of Time is ſo much lamented, were capable of learning nothing but Words at thoſe Years: I do not mind what ſome Quacks in the Art of Teaching ſay; they pretend to work Wonders, and to make young Gentlemen Maſters of the Languages, before they can be Maſters of Common Senſe; but this to me, my Lord, is a Demonſtration, that we are capable of little elſe than Words, till Twelve or Thirteen, if Your Lordſhip will obſerve, that a Boy ſhall be able to repeat his Grammar over, two or three Years before his Underſtanding opens enough to let him into the Reaſon, and clear Apprehenſion of the Rules; and when this is done ſooner or later, it ceaſeth to be Cant and Jargon;

Jargon; ſo that all this Clamour is wrong founded, and the Cauſe of Complaint lies rather againſt the Backwardneſs of our Judgment, than the Method of our Schools: And therefore I am for the old Way in Schools ſtill, and Children will be furniſhed there with a Stock of Words at leaſt, when they come to know how to uſe them.

But, my Lord, Perſons of Your Lordſhip's Condition may be permitted to go out of the common Road, and try to learn Things and Words together: I am of Opinion, that Language may be attained by the Reverſe of the Method that is generally taken, and a Youth taught to know Grammar by Books, inſtead of Books by Grammar. This was Mr. *Cowley*'s Caſe, and in ſome meaſure I may ſay it was my own at the ſame School, but it is by no means generally practicable. However,

ever, there is no Neceſſity, where we are not tied up by the Courſe and Diſcipline, which muſt, if poſſible, be maintained in Schools; if we be not obliged by thoſe Methods, there is no Neceſſity of burdening the Memory with an exact Repetition of the Rules: 'Tis enough from the Authors which are read, to learn the Uſe and Application of them: And if, after this, a clear Explication of the Meaning were joined to the bare Grammatical Conſtruction, young Scholars would be able to underſtand what they read, and be pleaſed to find that their Authors are made up of ſomething beſides the Eight Parts of Speech. Such a Method would indeed require more Pains in the Teacher; but thoſe would be well rewarded by the Progreſs and Satisfaction of the Scholar.

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Your Lordſhip is beyond theſe Rules, and will judge of the Reaſonableneſs of them with reſpect to others, who are juſt entring on the Stage of Learning. I only give Your Lordſhip my Thoughts: I do not pretend to dictate.

Your Lordſhip will therefore give me Leave to conſider another Complaint againſt the preſent Method of Learning, taken from the Multitude of Notes and Comments, which crowd the Authors, and perplex the Reader. I muſt own, I have not that Reſpect for the Company of *Annotators*, which they generally meet with in the World. Some indeed muſt be excepted; but Youths are not capable of uſing the Beſt, and the Worſt are not worth regarding: For which Reaſon the Celebrated Dr. *BUSBY* ſtrictly forbad the Uſe of Notes, and for our *Greek* and *Latin* Authors we had

had nothing but the plain Text in a correct and chaſte Edition. Under ſuch a Maſter they could do no Good, there was no need of the Beſt; and the others might do a great deal of Hurt, by infecting the Children at once with their own Blunders and Dulneſs.

Excepting thoſe of ſome very learned Men, Comments are generally an Art of making Authors difficult, under a Pretence of explaining them. And it hath been the hard Fortune of the beſt Writers to be perplexed with Notes, and obſcured by Illuſtrations. The Abilities of the Teacher will beſt ſupply the Defects of the Commentator; and it will be a Pleaſure to young Gentlemen, as he leads them along, to ſee from him the *Geography*, *Antiquities*, *Cuſtoms*, and *Hiſtory* of the Ancients. The *Poetical Story* is generally known, becauſe diverting to

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be read; eſpecially thoſe that are acquainted with the *Metamorphoſes* and *Apollodorus*, can be no Strangers to it; and all theſe together are the Foundation and Reaſon of all thoſe Heaps of *Comments*, which are piled ſo high upon Authors, that it is difficult ſometimes to clear the Text from the Rubbiſh, and draw it out of the Ruins.

If there is any Thing elſe Commentators concern themſelves about, it is Property of Expreſſion, or rather ſome Verbal Niceties, and Grammatical Scruples; for they have ſeldom Parts enough to diſcover the true Graces of their Authors; and thoſe Words, which in their Natural Situation ſhine like Jewels enchaſed in Gold, look, when tranſpoſed into their Notes, as if they were ſet in Lead, and adorned with that reſplendent Metal.

Setting

Setting theſe *grave Gentlemen* aſide, I have often wiſhed, my Lord, that ſome of the fineſt Wits would undertake the fineſt Writers in the World, and give us a Comment upon them, to diſplay the Life and Beauty of their Authors: It requireth a Genius, like that wherewith they writ, to write upon them: Every Man that underſtandeth *Latin* doth not underſtand either Greatneſs or Delicacy of Thought, Strength or Beauty of Expreſſion; and ſome Critical Heads, ſuch abſolute Maſters are they of their Paſſions, can bear the Raptures and Flights of Poets with a wonderful Command of Temper, and be no more affected with the moſt moving Strains, than if they were reading the heavieſt Piece of their own Compoſing. They have no Notion of Life and Fire in Fancy and in Words, and any Thing that is juſt in Gram-

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mar and in Meaſure, provided always the Words be placed according to Art, is as good Oratory, and Poetry to them, as the beſt. 'Tis no Wonder, then, their Comments make the moſt ſprightly Authors Phlegmatic and Dull, and that to read them with their bright Obſervations, is like reading *Homer* in a Proſe Tranſlation.

" The great Art of Teaching, " my Lord, is to give the Learners " a true Taſte of their Authors; " to open the Beauties of their " Thoughts and Style; to ſhow " them the bright Parts, the pecu- " liar Excellencies, the Force and " Spirit, the Eaſe and Gentleneſs of " their Writings: How All is Un- " common, and All is Natural, and " Every Thing ſo thought and ſaid, " that upon the Occaſion it is im- " poſſible to deliver better Thoughts " in better Words.

But this, my Lord, is not the Talent of Critics and Grammarians: They can give indeed the Rules of *Syntax* and of *Rhetoric*, and make a ſhift to exemplify them in a wretched Compoſition, by bringing in every odd Exception in Grammar, every Figure and Scheme of Speech, Head and Shoulders, by main Force, in ſpite of Nature and their Subject. For be the Subject what it will, the Style and the Decorations are the ſame; ſo that their Diſcourſe having no Coherence, but the coupling Particles, looketh like a perfect Skeleton tacked together with Wires, ſtaring hollow, ſtiff and horrid, ſtripped of Senſe, without Nerves and Sinews, Life and Motion.

I will trouble Your Lordſhip no longer upon this Subject; and if I have ſaid any Thing to ſecure You againſt the Impreſſions of this poor Sort

Sort of Learning, I only intended a neceſſary Caution; and if ever theſe Sheets become more Publick, I hope no truly learned Man will be offended. I am ſure, I am very far from having any mean Thoughts of thoſe great Men who preſide in our chiefeſt and moſt celebrated Schools; it is my Happineſs to be known to the moſt Eminent of them in a particular Manner, and they will acquit me of any Diſreſpect, where they know I have the greateſt Veneration; for with them the Genius of Claſſic Learning dwelleth, and from them it is derived. And I think myſelf honoured in the Acquaintance of ſome Maſters in the Country, who are not leſs Polite, than they are Learned, and to the exact Knowledge of the *Greek* and *Roman* Tongues have joined a true Taſte, and delicate Reliſh of the Claſſic Authors. But ſhould Your Lordſhip

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ever light into ſome Formal Hands, though Your Senſe is too fine to reliſh thoſe Pedantries I have been remonſtrating againſt, when You come to underſtand them, yet for the preſent they may impoſe upon You with a grave Appearance; and, as Learning is commonly managed by ſuch Perſons, You may think them very *Learned*, becauſe they are very *Dull*. And if You ſhould receive the Tincture, while You are young, it may ſink too deep for all the Waters of *Helicon* to take out. You may be ſenſible of it as we are of ill Habits, which we regret, but cannot break, and ſo it may mix with Your Studies for ever, and give bad Colours to every Thing You deſign, whether in Speech or Writing.

For, my Lord, theſe meaner Critics dreſs up their Entertainments ſo very Ill, that they will ſpoil Your Palate, and bring You to a vicious Taſte.

Taſte. With them, as with diſtemper'd Stomachs, the fineſt Food and nobleſt Juices turn to nothing but Crudities and Indigeſtion. You will have no Notion of Delicacies, if You table with them; they are all for rank and foul Feeding, and ſpoil the beſt Proviſions in the Cooking: You muſt be content to be taught Parſimony in Senſe, and for Your moſt inoffenſive Food to live upon dry Meat and inſipid Stuff without any Poignancy or Reliſh.

So then, my Lord, theſe Gentlemen will never be able to form Your Taſte or Your Style; and thoſe who cannot give You a true Reliſh of the beſt Writers in the World, can never inſtruct You to write like them.

Give me Leave, my Lord, to touch this Subject, and draw out for Your Lordſhip's Uſe, ſome of the chief Strokes, ſome of the principal Lineaments, and faireſt Features of a

juſt and beautiful Style. There is no Neceſſity of being methodical, and I will not entertain Your Lordſhip with a dry Syſtem upon the Matter, but with what You will read with more Pleaſure, and, I hope, with equal Profit, ſome deſultory Thoughts in their Native Order, as they riſe in my Mind without being reduced to Rules, and marſhalled according to Art.

I am ambitious, my Lord, to ſee You Maſter of a fine Pen; You have ſo many Advantages to command it, that You may eaſily excell; for as You have laid the neceſſary Foundation, if You raiſe upon it the beautiful Structure of Claſſic Learning, it is impoſſible Your Lordſhip ſhould not ſtand upon the higheſt Eminence, and hold the firſt Rank with thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed for the Beauties of their Style. For beſide the common Accompliſhment of Claſſic

Claſſic Learning, Perſons of Your Lordſhip's Quality have ſo fine a Turn, ſo genteel an Air from their Breeding, and courtly Converſation, in every Thing they write or ſpeak, that it giveth an inimitable Grace to their Words and Compoſitions; and I never knew a Nobleman equal in Learning to other Men, but he was ſuperior to them in the Delicacy and Civility of his Style.

Cæſar, my Lord, writ like a Man of Quality; and among innumerable Excellencies, which he holdeth in common with other Authors, he poſſeſſeth this almoſt peculiar to himſelf, that You ſee the *Prince* and the *Gentleman*, as well as the *Scholar* and the *Soldier*, in his Memoirs. *Ovid* was all over a Man of Breeding, and perhaps, if I may be allowed to make a Conjecture, the Copiouſneſs of his Expreſſions was owing in ſome meaſure to the Civility of

his Breeding, as well as to the Luxuriance of his Fancy; and indeed, my Lord, that is the Fault I have found in the Writings of Gentlemen, that ſometimes they overflow with Words. This proceedeth, I believe, from their daily Complaiſance, which runs them into Variety of Expreſſions on the ſame Subject; whereas Your Scholars are more cloſe, and, as if their Learning were as narrow as their Fortune, they are frugal of their Words, and not willing to let any go for Ornament, if they will not ſerve for Uſe. Some People may call this a ſmall Piece of Criticiſm; all that I would prove by it, if it be not well founded, is, that *Ovid* was a Man of Breeding; and though *Virgil* and *Horace* were Courtiers too, yet they fell ſhort of him in Courtlineſs of Expreſſion, however they exceeded him in Majeſty of Thought, in Cloſeneſs and Exact-

Exactneſs of Style. And for *Horace*, my Lord, who was an humble Servant of the Ladies, as well as he, after we have acknowledged him a wonderful Genius, of a peculiar Happineſs of Expreſſion both in the ſublime, and familiar Way, we muſt aſcribe the Softneſs and Eaſineſs of his Style to the Court and Love. In ſhort, my Lord, *Ovid* was a Gentleman, and the others not, his good Breeding was natural to him from his Infancy; theirs was acquired in their riper Years, and would never ſit ſo handſomely upon them. *Terence*, my Lord, who was much Elder than they, may ſeem an Exception; there is no Addreſs more civil and accompliſhed, than his throughout his Plays, and his Gentlemen appear truly ſuch upon all Occaſions; but this poſſibly may be accounted for more eaſily than ſome *Phænomena* in Philoſophy, if I may

have Leave to ſuppoſe, that all the Aſſiſtance he received from *Scipio* and *Lælius* was in this Part of his Characters; and while the Comedian took Care to preſerve them in the Humour and Manners he had given them, his noble Friends might help him in giving them the true Turn of Gentlemen. We have ſeveral others who are recorded for celebrated Wits among the *Nobility* and *Gentry* of *Rome*, but I need not detain Your Lordſhip any longer there.

After the Court of *Auguſtus*, we may mention the Court of King *Charles* II. and find my Lord *Rocheſter* and *Dorſet*, the Duke of *Buckingham* that was then, and the Duke of *Buckingham* that is now, Paramount in Wit, and as Graceful in their Writings, as in their Perſons: The Wit of ſome of them indeed was ſcandalouſly abuſed, but otherwiſe

wiſe their Satyr was Courtly, and their Poetry upon all other Subjects in the laſt Perfection. My Lord *Roſcommon*, inferiour to none in Soundneſs of Judgment, ſurpaſſeth them in the Innocency and Uſefulneſs of his Writings: Sir *Robert Howard*, Sir *Charles Sidley*, Sir *John Denham*, Mr. *Waller*, Sir *George Etherege*, and I may add Mr. *Walſh*, writ like themſelves; their Learning and Quality adorn each other, and You read their Education as Gentlemen, as well as Scholars, in their Compoſitions. Mr. *Dryden*, *Oldham*, and other celebrated Wits, I forbear to name, becauſe they want that diſtinguiſhing Character of Affability, Courteſy, and fine Breeding in their Works; or I may name them upon Compariſon with the others, to ſhow the Difference, and maintain my Point. Mr. *Dryden* was indeed a Gentleman, but he writ more like

a Scholar, and tho' the greateſt Maſter of Poetry the laſt Age could boaſt, he wanted that Eaſineſs and Familiarity, that Air of Freedom and Unconſtraint, that genteel and accompliſhed Manner of Expreſſion, which is more ſenſibly to be perceived, than deſcribed.

To come to the preſent Times, my Lord *Hallifax* beareth a Title conſecrated to Wit, and if he doth not reach the *Saville* Family in Heighth of Quality, he doth not fall below them in the Excellency of his Pen, and in Poetry he ſoareth above them. Mr. *Granville* is the Poetical Son of *Waller*: We obſerved with Pleaſure Similitude of Wit in the Difference of Years, and in Mr. *Granville* do meet at once the Fire of his Father's Youth, and the Judgment of his Age. Others I forbear, becauſe tho' a thouſand Occaſions teſtify their Abilities, their Modeſty hath hitherto

therto concealed their Works and Names; only give me leave to add, it is the Opinion of ſome good Judges, that if the Duke of *Marlborough* would give us his own *Memoirs*, we ſhould find he could *Write*, as well as *Fight*, like *Cæſar*. I am fallen from Verſe to Proſe, my Lord, and here I muſt not paſs by Sir *William Temple*, the moſt perfect Pattern of good *Writing* and good *Breeding* this Nation hath produced.

The Obſervation I have made is ſo univerſal, it were endleſs to purſue it in any farther Examples; and, my Lord, ſome few Inſtances excepted, there is as much Difference between the Writings of Men of Quality and Scholars, as there is in the Behaviour of a *Dancing-Maſter* and a *Gentleman*.

Your Lordſhip ſtandeth upon ſuch Advantage of Ground, that, when You have finiſhed Your Studies, You

need only write, and You will excell. Your Education giveth You the moſt difficult Part, and that Eaſineſs and handſome Addreſs in Writing, which is hardeſt to be attained by Perſons bred in a meaner Way, will be Familiar to Your Lordſhip. And if ever You do write, You will write as You ſpeak, with all the Civility and good Breeding in the World. This, my Lord, will certainly be the happy Turn of Your Pen: Nothing can be wanting, but a Store of ſound Learning, to be put into ſo genteel a Dreſs; and when You ſhall have furniſhed Yourſelf with that, and come to know the Correctneſs of Style, the Graces and Beauties of it will be Natural and Charming in all Your Compoſitions.

To aſſiſt Your Lordſhip therefore, as far as Art may be an Help to Nature, I ſhall proceed to ſay ſome-

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thing of what is required in a finiſhed Piece, to make it Complete in all its Parts, and Maſterly in the Whole.

I would not lay down any impracticable Schemes, nor trouble Your Lordſhip with a dry formal Method: The Rule of Writing, like that of our Duty, is perfect in its Kind; but we muſt make Allowances for the Infirmities of Nature, and ſince *none is without his Faults*, the moſt that can be ſaid, is, that *He is the beſt Writer, againſt whom the Feweſt can be alledged.*

" A Compoſition is then perfect, " my Lord, when the Matter riſeth " out of the Subject, when the " Thoughts are agreeable to the " Matter, and the Expreſſions ſuita- " ble to the Thoughts, where there " is no Inconſiſtency from the Be- " ginning to the End; when the " Whole is perſpicuous in the beau-

" tiful Order of its Parts, and for-
" med in due Symmetry and Pro-
" portion.

It is the common Abſurdity of raw and injudicious Writers, to propoſe one Thing for their Subject, and run off to another: They are not Maſters of what they undertake, the Compaſs of their Knowledge is too narrow, and their Shoulders are too weak to ſuſtain the Work. From this fundamental Error flow all the other Vices and Corruptions of Writing; Matter foreign to the Subject; wild, incoherent Fancies, inſtead of Thought, and Expreſſions that have no other Commendation, than that they are as Childiſh as their Thoughts. What crude undigeſted Volumes of this Sort have we ſeen? How many tedious Sheets without Argument or Conſiſtency? Such, my Lord, are many of the *Diſſenters* Writings in Point of Faith,

Doctrine

Doctrine and Practice, tho' we have but few of their Practical Pieces, and thoſe we have, that are of any Value, were written by the beſt Pens among them.

But when a Man throughly underſtandeth his Subject, and knoweth what is conſiſtent, or inconſiſtent with it, he will write upon it with more or leſs Applauſe, according to the Scope and Compaſs of his Thoughts: Some are bound up in narrow Schemes of Things, while Men of Genius and freer Spirits look abroad into Nature, and diſcover a thouſand beautiful Relations that lie concealed to thoſe, who trade only in dry Schemes and Syſtems. Our Thoughts muſt be conformable to the Matter and Subject that lie before us, but we have full Liberty to range, provided we can command our Fancy, and bring it home to the Purpoſe. The Thought may be either

ther too narrow, or too wide; too poor and mean to give either Life, or Light to our Writings, or too wandring and diſtant to bear any Relation to the Subject. I am not ſpeaking of the Brightneſs and Beauty, but of the Propriety of Thought; though, if the Thoughts be Bright and Beautiful, as well as Proper, they add, no doubt, a Grace and Splendor to the Diſcourſe; only let them be Juſt and Natural, and it dependeth upon the Genius of the Writer to give them more Force and Fire. *Horace* hath drawn the Picture of thoſe abſurd Painters and Poets, that join a Woman's Head to a Fiſh's Tail, and crowd Contradictions in the ſame Piece together. He hath expoſed and ridiculed thoſe trifling Poetaſters, that ſpend themſelves in glaring Deſcriptions, and would compenſate for their Dulneſs and Incapacity, by ſewing here

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and there ſome Cloth of Gold on their Sackcloth. All inconſiderate Writers, or Writers not furniſhed for Conſideration, are the ſame. Their Imagination either rambles, or is low and dull; either it cannot riſe to the Subject, or wandreth from it. 'Tis nothing but a Vapour and falſe Fire; and if in reading thoſe wretched Scribblers we look for any Meaning, we only follow an *Ignis fatuus* till we are tired.

Some Peoples Heads are either ſo empty, or ſo diſconcerted, that nothing is more removed from the Matter they have laid out to treat on, than their Thoughts; and if it ſometimes happeneth that they do not wander quite away from their Purpoſe, the Misfortune is, that on the graveſt, nobleſt Subjects, their Thoughts are light and fooliſh, poor and mean; and on the moſt incon-

inconſiderable trifling Matters, they are all Noiſe and Bombaſt, affecting Splendor and Magnificence in Things that will endure neither Light nor Ornament, ever riſing where they ſhould ſink, and falling where they ſhould riſe.

There is a Chain of Relations in Nature, which muſt not be broken, nor twiſted with any other String: The whole World of Being, the Qualities, Properties, Accidents and Affections of Things are diſtributed into proper Claſſes, as they are compatible or inconſiſtent with one another. Propriety of Thought therefore muſt ariſe from a competent Knowledge of the Nature and Decency of Things; in being acquainted with what is capable of being ſaid, and what is fit to be ſpoken upon any Subject. And Thought is then in the laſt Perfection, when it is ſo bright, ſo live-

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ly, ſo juſt, ſo full, that on the ſame Subject You cannot invent any, Finer, or more Proper in the whole Compaſs of Nature and Imagination.

There is a cloſe Connexion between the Thoughts and Words; and where a Man hath throughly digeſted the one, the other will follow not only with Eaſe, but Propriety, when he is a perfect Maſter of the Language he writeth in. It muſt be a great Fault of the Judgment, if where the Thoughts are proper, the Expreſſions are not ſo too: A Diſagreement between theſe ſeldom happens, but among Men of more recondite Studies, and what they call deep Learning, eſpecially among Your Antiquaries and School-men.

In every ſprightly Genius, the Expreſſion will ever be lively as the Thoughts. All the Danger is, that

that a Wit too fruitful ſhould run out into unneceſſary Branches; but when it is matured by Age, and corrected by Judgment, the Writer will prune the luxuriant Boughs, and cut off the ſuperfluous Shoots of Fancy, thereby giving both Strength and Beauty to his Work.

Perhaps, my Lord, this Piece of Diſcipline is to young Writers the greateſt Self-Denial in the World. To confine the Fancy, to ſtifle the Birth, much more to throw away the beautiful Offspring of the Brain, is a Trial, that none but the moſt delicate and lively Wits can be put to. It is their Praiſe, that they are obliged to retrench more Wit, than others have to laviſh: The Chippings and Filings of theſe Jewels, could they be preſerved, are of more Value, than the whole Maſs of ordinary Authors; and it is a *Maxim* with me, that *He hath not Wit enough*,

enough, who hath not a great deal to ſpare.

My Lord, it is by no means neceſſary for me to run out into the ſeveral Sorts of Writing: We have general Rules to judge of all, without being Particular upon any, tho' the Style of an *Orator* be different from that of an *Hiſtorian*, and a *Poet*'s from both.

The Deſign of Expreſſion is to convey our Thoughts truly and clearly to the World, in ſuch a manner, as is moſt probable to attain the End we propoſe, in communicating what we have conceived to the Public; and therefore Men have not thought it enough to write plainly, unleſs they wrote agreeably, ſo as to engage the Attention, and work upon the Affections, as well as inform the Underſtanding of their Readers; for which Reaſon all Arts have been invented

to

to make their Writings pleaſing, as well as profitable; and thoſe Arts are very commendable and honeſt: They are no Trick, no Deluſion, or Impoſition on the Senſes and Underſtanding of Mankind; for they are founded in Nature, and formed upon obſerving her Operations in all the various Paſſions, and Workings of our Minds.

To this we owe all the Beauties and Embelliſhments of Style: All Figures and Schemes of Speech, and thoſe ſeveral Decorations that are uſed in Writings to enliven and adorn the Work. The Flouriſhes of Fancy reſemble the Flouriſhes of the Pen in Mechanick Writers; and the Illuminators of Manuſcripts, and of the Preſs, borrowed their Title perhaps from the Illumination, which a bright Genius every where giveth to his Work, and diſperſeth through his Compoſition.

The

The Commendation of this Art of Enlightening and Adorning a Subject, lieth in a right Diſtribution of the Shades and Light. It is in Writing, as in Picture, in which the Art is to obſerve where the Lights will fall, to produce the moſt beautiful Parts to the Day, and caſt in Shades what we cannot hope will ſhine to Advantage.

It were endleſs to purſue this Subject through all the Ornaments and Illuſtrations of Speech; and yet I would not diſmiſs it without pointing at the general Rules, and neceſſary Qualifications required in thoſe, who would attempt to ſhine in the Productions of their Pen. And therefore Your Lordſhip muſt pardon me if I ſeem to go back, for we cannot raiſe any regular and durable Pile of Building without laying a firm Foundation.

The

The firſt Thing requiſite, my Lord, to a *juſt Style*, is a perfect Maſtery in the Language we write in; this is not ſo eaſily attained, as is commonly imagined, and dependeth upon a competent Knowledge of the Force and Propriety of Words, a good natural Taſte of Strength and Delicacy, and all the Beauties of Expreſſion. It is my own Opinion, that all the Rules and Critical Obſervations in the World will never bring a Man to a *juſt Style*, who hath not of himſelf a natural eaſy Way of Writing; but they will improve a good Genius, where Nature leadeth the Way, provided he is not too ſcrupulous, and doth not make himſelf a Slave to his Rules; for that will introduce a Stiffneſs and Affectation, which are utterly abhorrent from all good Writing.

By

By a perfect Maſtery in any Language, I underſtand not only a ready Command of Words, upon every Occaſion, not only the Force, and Propriety of Words, as to their Senſe and Signification, but more eſpecially the Purity and Idiom of the Languge; for in this a perfect Maſtery doth conſiſt. 'Tis to know what is *Engliſh*, and what is *Latin*, what is *French*, *Spaniſh*, or *Italian*, to be able to mark the Bounds of each Language we write in, to point out the diſtinguiſhing Characters, and the peculiar Phraſes of each Tongue. What Expreſſions, or Manner of Expreſſing is common to any Language beſides our own, and what is properly and peculiarly our Phraſe, and Way of Speaking. For this is to ſpeak or write *Engliſh* in Purity and Perfection, to let the Streams run clear, and unmix'd, without taking in other Languages in

in the Courſe: In *Engliſh* therefore, I would have all *Galliciſms* (for Inſtance) avoided, that our Tongue may be ſincere, that we may keep to our own Language, and not follow the *French* Mode in our Speech, as we do in our Cloaths. It is convenient and profitable ſometimes to import a Foreign Word, and naturalize the Phraſe of another Nation, but this is very ſparingly to be allowed, and every Syllable of Foreign Growth ought immediately to be diſcarded, if its Uſe and Ornament to our Language be not very evident.

While the *Romans* ſtudied, and uſed the *Greek* Tongue, only to improve and adorn their own, the *Latin* flouriſhed, and grew every Year more Copious, more Elegant, and Expreſſive; but in a few Years after the Ladies and Beaux of *Rome* affected to ſpeak *Greek*, and regard-

ed

ed nothing but the Softneſs and Effeminacy of that noble Language; they weakned and corrupted their Native Tongue: And the monſtrous Affectation of our travelled Ladies and Gentlemen to ſpeak in the *French* Air, *French* Tone, *French* Terms, to dreſs, to cook, to write, to court in *French*, corrupted at once our Language and our Manners, and introduced an abominable Gallimaufry of *French* and *Engliſh* mixed together, that made the Innovators ridiculous to all Men of Senſe. The *French* Tongue hath undoubtedly its Graces and Beauties, and I am not againſt any real Improvement of our own Language from that or any other; but we are always ſo fooliſh, or unfortunate, as never to make any Advantage of our Neighbours. We affect nothing of theirs, but what is ſilly and ridiculous; and by neg-

leſting the ſubſtantial Uſe of their Language, we only enervate, and ſpoil our own.

Languages, like our Bodies, are in a perpetual Flux, and ſtand in need of Recruits to ſupply the Place of thoſe Words that are continually falling off thro' Diſuſe; and ſince it is ſo, my Lord, I think 'tis better to *raiſe* them at *Home* than *Abroad*. We had better *rely* on our *own Troops* than *Foreign* Forces, and I believe we have ſufficient Strength and Numbers within ourſelves: There is a vaſt Treaſure, an inexhauſtible Fund in the old *Engliſh*, from whence Authors may draw conſtant Supplies, as our Officers make their ſureſt Recruits from the Coal-Works and the Mines. The Weight, the Strength, and Significancy of many antiquated Words, ſhould recommend them to Uſe again. 'Tis only wiping off the Ruſt

Ruſt they have contracted, and ſeparating them from the Droſs they lie mingled with, and both in Value and Beauty they will riſe above the Standard, rather than fall below it.

Perhaps our Tongue is not ſo muſical to the Ear, nor ſo abundant in Multiplicity of Words; but its Strength is real, and its Words are therefore the more expreſſive: The peculiar Character of our Language is, that it is cloſe, compact, and full; and our Writings (if Your Lordſhip will excuſe two *Latin Words*) come neareſt to what *Tully* means by his *Preſſa Oratio.* They are all Weight, and Subſtance, good Meaſure preſſed together, and running over in a Redundancy of Senſe, and not of Words. And therefore the Purity of our Language conſiſteth in preſerving this Character, in writing with the *Engliſh*

gliſh Strength and *Spirit:* Let us not envy others, that they are more ſoft, and diffuſed, and rarified; be it our Commendation to write as we pay, in true *Sterling*; if we want Supplies, we had better revive *old* Words, than create *new* ones. I look upon our Language as good Bullion, if we do not debaſe it with too much Allay; and let me leave this Cenſure with Your Lordſhip, That he who corrupteth the Purity of the *Engliſh* Tongue with the moſt ſpecious foreign Words and Phraſes, is juſt as wiſe as thoſe Modiſh Ladies that change their Plate for China: For which, my Lord, I think the laudable Traffick of old Cloaths is much the faireſt Barter.

After this Regard to the Purity of our Language, the next Quality of a juſt Style, is its Plainneſs and *Perſpicuity*. My Lord, this is the

greateſt

greateſt Commendation we can give an Author, and the beſt Argument that he is Maſter of the Language he writeth in, and the Subject he writeth upon, when we underſtand him, and ſee into the Scope and Tendency of his Thoughts, as we read him. All Obſcurity of Expreſſion, and Darkneſs of Senſe, do ariſe from the Confuſion of the Writer's Thoughts, and his Want of proper Words. If a Man hath not a clear Perception of the Matters he undertaketh to treat of, be his Style never ſo plain as to the Words he uſeth, it never can be clear; and if his Thoughts upon his Subject be never ſo juſt and diſtinct, unleſs he hath a ready Command of Words, and a Faculty of eaſy Writing in plain obvious Expreſſions, the Words will perplex the Senſe, and cloud the Clearneſs of his Thoughts.

It is the Unhappineſs of ſome, that they are not able to expreſs themſelves clearly: Their Heads are crowded with a Multiplicity of undigeſted Knowledge, which lieth confuſed in the Brain, without any Order or Diſtinction. It is the Vice of others, to affect Obſcurity in their Thoughts and Language, to write in a difficult crabbed Style, and perplex the Reader with an intricate Meaning in more intricate Words.

The common Way of offending againſt Plainneſs and Perſpicuity of Style is, an Affectation of hard unuſual Words, and of cloſe contracted Periods: The Faults of Pedants and Sententious Writers! that are vainly oſtentatious of their Learning, or their Wiſdom. Hard Words and quaint Expreſſions are abominable: Where-ever Your Lordſhip meeteth ſuch a Writer, throw him aſide for

a Coxcomb. Some Authors of Reputation have uſed a ſhort and conciſe Way of Expreſſion, I muſt own; and if they are not ſo clear as others, the Fault is to be laid on the *Brevity* they *labour* after: *For while we ſtudy to be conciſe, we can hardly avoid being obſcure.* We crowd our Thoughts into too ſmall a Compaſs, and are ſo ſparing of our Words, that we will not afford enow to expreſs our Meaning.

There is another Extreme in obſcure Writers, my Lord, not much taken notice of, which ſome empty conceited Heads are apt to run into, out of a Prodigality of Words, and a Want of Senſe. This is the Extravagance of Your copious Writers, who loſe their Meaning in the Multitude of Words, and bury their Senſe under Heaps of Phraſes. Their Underſtanding is rather rarified, than condenſed: Their Mean-

ing, we cannot ſay, is dark and thick; it is too light and ſubtle to be diſcerned; it is ſpread ſo thin, and diffuſed ſo wide, that it is hard to be collected. Two Lines would expreſs all they ſay in two Pages: 'Tis nothing but whipt Syllabub and Froth, a little Varniſh, and Gilding, without any Solidity, or Subſtance.

My Lord, the deepeſt Rivers have the plaineſt Surface, and the pureſt Waters are always cleareſt. Cryſtal is not the leſs ſolid for being tranſparent; the Value of a Style riſeth like the Value of precious Stones. If it be dark and cloudy, it is in vain to poliſh it: It beareth its Worth in its Native Looks, and the ſame Art which enhanceth its Price when it is clear, only debaſeth it if it be dull.

Your

Your Lordſhip ſeeth I have borrowed ſome Metaphors to explain my Thoughts; and it is, I believe, impoſſible to deſcribe the Plainneſs and Clearneſs of Style, without ſome Expreſſions clearer than the Terms I am otherwiſe bound up to uſe.

Your Lordſhip muſt give me Leave to go on with You to the Decorations and Ornaments of Style: There is no Inconſiſtency between the Plainneſs and Perſpicuity, and the Ornament of Writing. A Style, my Lord, reſembleth Beauty, where the Face is clear and plain as to Symmetry and Proportion, but is capable of wonderful Improvements, as to Features and Complexion. If I may tranſgreſs in too frequent Alluſions, becauſe I would make every Thing plain to Your Lordſhip, I would paſs on from Painters to Statuaries, whoſe

Excellence it is, at firſt to form true and juſt Proportions, and afterwards to give them that Softneſs, that Expreſſion, that Strength, and Delicacy, which make them almoſt breathe, and live.

My Lord, the Decorations of Style are formed out of thoſe ſeveral Schemes and Figures, which are contrived to expreſs the Paſſions and Motions of our Minds in our Speech; to give Life and Ornament, Grace and Beauty, to our Expreſſions. I ſhall not undertake the Rhetorician's Province, in giving Your Lordſhip an Account of all the Figures they have invented, and thoſe ſeveral Ornaments of Writing, whoſe Grace and Commendation lie in being uſed with Judgment and Propriety. It were endleſs to purſue this Subject thro' all the Schemes and Illuſtrations of Speech: But there are ſome common Forms, which

which every Writer upon every Subject may uſe, to enliven and adorn his Work.

Theſe, my Lord, are Metaphor, and Similitude, and thoſe Images and Repreſentations, that are drawn in the ſtrongeſt, and moſt lively Colours, to imprint what the Writer would have his Readers conceive more deeply on their Minds. In the Choice, and in the Uſe of theſe, your ordinary Writers are moſt apt to offend. Images are very ſparingly to be introduced; their proper Place is in Poems and Orations, and their Uſe is to move Pity or Terror, Admiration, Compaſſion, Anger and Reſentment, by repreſenting ſomething very affectionate, or very dreadful, very aſtoniſhing, very miſerable, or very provoking to our Thoughts. They give a wonderful Force and Beauty to the Subject, where they are painted

by a Maſterly Hand; but if they are either weakly drawn, or unskilfully placed, they raiſe no Paſſion but Indignation in the Reader.

The moſt common Ornaments, my Lord, are Metaphor and Similitude. One is an Alluſion to Words, the other to Things; and both have their Beauties, if properly applied.

Similitudes ought to be drawn from the moſt familiar and beſt known Particulars in the World: If any Thing is dark and obſcure in them, the Purpoſe of uſing them is defeated; and that which is not clear itſelf, can never give Light to any Thing that wants it. It is the idle Fancy of ſome poor Brains to run out perpetually into a Courſe of Similitudes, confounding their Subject by the Multitude of Likeneſſes, and making it like ſo many Things, that it is like Nothing at all. This

trifling

trifling Humour is good for nothing, but to convince us, that the Author is in the dark himſelf; and while he is likening his Subject to every Thing, he knoweth not what it is like.

There is another tedious Fault in ſome *Simile Men*, which is drawing their Compariſons into a great Length and Minute Particulars, where it is of no Importance whether the Reſemblance holdeth or no. But the true Art of illuſtrating any Subject by Similitude, is, firſt, to pitch on ſuch a Reſemblance as all the World will agree in; and then, without being careful to have it run on all Four, to touch it only in the ſtrongeſt Lines, and the neareſt Likeneſs. And this will ſecure us, my Lord, from all Stiffneſs and Formality in Similitude, and deliver us from the nauſeous Repetition of *As* and *So*, which ſome *ſo ſo* Writers, if I

may

may beg Leave to call them *ſo*, are continually ſounding in our Ears.

I have Nothing to ſay, my Lord, to thoſe Gentlemen, who bring Similitudes, and forget the Reſemblance. All the Pleaſure we can take, when we meet theſe promiſing Sparks, is in the Diſappointment, where we find their Fancy is ſo like their Subject, that it is not like at all.

Metaphors, my Lord, require great Judgment and Conſideration in the Uſe of them. They are a ſhorter Similitude, where the Likeneſs is rather implied than expreſſed. The Signification of one Word in Metaphors is transferred to another, and we talk of one Thing in the Terms and Propriety of another. But, my Lord, there muſt be a common Reſemblance, ſome Original Likeneſs in Nature, ſome Correſpondence and eaſy Tranſition, or Metaphors are ſhocking and confuſed.

The

The Beauty of them diſplays itſelf in their Eaſineſs and Propriety, where they are naturally introduced; but where they are forced, and crowded, too frequent and various, and do not riſe out of the Courſe of Thought, but are conſtrained and preſſed into the Service, inſtead of making the Diſcourſe more lively and chearful, they make it ſullen, dull and gloomy.

Your Lordſhip muſt form Your Judgment upon the beſt Models, and the moſt celebrated Pens, where You will find the Metaphor in all its Grace and Strength, ſhedding a Luſtre and Beauty on the Work. For it ought never to be uſed, but when it giveth greater Force to the Sentence, an Illuſtration to the Thought, and inſinuateth a ſilent Argument in the Alluſion. The Uſe of Metaphors is not only to convey the Thought in a more pleaſing Manner;

ner, but to give it a ſtronger Impreſſion, and enforce it on the Mind. Where this is not regarded, they are vain, and trifling Traſh; and in a due Obſervance of this, in a pure, chaſte, natural Expreſſion, conſiſt the Juſtneſs, Beauty, and Delicacy of Style.

I have ſaid nothing of Epithets; their Buſineſs is to expreſs the Nature of the Things they are applied to; and the Choice of them dependeth upon a good Judgment, to diſtinguiſh what are the moſt proper Titles to be given on all Occaſions, and a complete Knowledge in the Accidents, Qualities, and Affections of every Thing in the World. They are of moſt Ornament when they are of Uſe: They are to determine the Character of every Perſon, and decide the Merits of every Cauſe; Conſcience and Juſtice are to be regarded, and great Skill and Exactneſs

neſs are required in the uſe of them. For it is of great Importance to call Things by their right Names: The Points of Satyr, and Strains of Compliment depend upon it, otherwiſe we may make an Aſs of a Lion, commend a Man in Satyr, and lampoon him in Panegyric. Here alſo, my Lord, there is room for Genius: Common Juſtice and Judgment ſhould direct us to ſay what is proper at leaſt, but it is Parts and Fire that will prompt us to the moſt lively and moſt forcible Epithets that can be applied; and 'tis in their Energy and Propriety their Beauty lieth.

Allegories I need not mention, becauſe they are not ſo much any Ornament of Style, as an artful Way of recommending Truth to the World in a borrowed Shape, and a Dreſs more agreeable to the Fancy, than naked Truth herſelf can be.

Truth

Truth is ever moſt beautiful and evident in her Native Dreſs: And the Arts that are uſed to convey her to our Minds, are no Argument that ſhe is deficient, but ſo many Teſtimonies of the Corruption of our Nature, when Truth, of all Things the plaineſt and ſincereſt, is forced to gain Admittance to us in Diſguiſe, and court us in Maſquerade.

My Lord, there is one Ingredient more required to the Perfection of Style, which I have partly mentioned already in ſpeaking of the Suitableneſs of the Thoughts to the Subject, and of the Words to the Thoughts; but Your Lordſhip will give me Leave to conſider it in another Light with regard to the Majeſty and Dignity of the Subject.

It is fit, as we have ſaid already, that the Thoughts and Expreſſion ſhould be ſuited to the Matter on all Occaſions; but in nobler and greater

Subjects,

Subjects, especially where the Theme is Sacred and Divine, it must be our Care to think and write up to the Dignity and Majesty of the Things we presume to treat of: Nothing little, mean, or low, no childish Thoughts, or boyish Expressions, will be endured: All must be awful, and grave, and great, and solemn. The noblest Sentiments must be conveyed in the weightiest Words: All Ornaments and Illustrations must be borrowed from the richest Parts of universal Nature; and in Divine Subjects, especially when we attempt to speak of GOD, of His Wisdom, Goodness and Power, of his Mercy and Justice, of his Dispensations and Providence, by all which He is pleased to manifest Himself to the Sons of Men; we must raise our Thoughts, and enlarge our Minds, and search all the Treasures of Knowledge for every Thing that

is

is great, wonderful and magnificent: We can only expreſs our Thoughts of the Creator in the Works of His Creation; and the brighteſt of theſe can only give us ſome faint Shadows of His Greatneſs and His Glory. The ſtrongeſt Figures are too weak, the moſt exalted Language too low, to expreſs His ineffable Excellence. No *Hyperbole* can be brought to heighten our Thoughts; for in ſo ſublime a Theme nothing can be *Hyperbolical.* The Riches of Imagination are poor, and all the Rivers of Eloquence are dry in ſupplying Thought on an infinite Subject. How poor and mean, how baſe and groveling, are the Heathen Conceptions of the Deity! Something Sublime and Noble muſt needs be ſaid on ſo great an Occaſion; but in this great Article the moſt Celebrated of the Heathen Pens ſeem to flag and ſink; they bear up in no Propor-

Proportion to the Dignity of the Theme, as if they were depreſſed by the Weight, and dazzled with the Splendor of the Subject.

We have no Inſtances to produce of any Writers that riſe at all to the Majeſty and Dignity of the Divine Attributes, except the Sacred Pen-Men. No leſs than Divine Inſpiration could enable Men to write worthily of GOD, and none but the Spirit of GOD knew how to expreſs His Greatneſs, and diſplay His Glory: In Compariſon of theſe Divine Writers, the greateſt *Genius's*, the nobleſt Wits of the Heathen World, are low and dull. The ſublime Majeſty, and royal Magnificence of the Scripture Poems, are above the Reach, and beyond the Power of all mortal Wit. Take the beſt and livelieſt Poems of Antiquity, and read them, as we do the Scriptures, in a Proſe Tranſlation, and they

they are flat and poor. *Horace*, and *Virgil*, and *Homer*, loſe their Spirits and their Strength in the Transfuſion, to that Degree, that we have hardly Patience to read them. But, my Lord, the Sacred Writings, even in our Tranſlation, preſerve their Majeſty and their Glory, and very far ſurpaſs the brighteſt and nobleſt Compoſitions of *Greece* and *Rome*. And this is not owing to the Richneſs and Solemnity of the Eaſtern Eloquence; for it holdeth in no other Inſtance, but to the Divine Direction and Aſſiſtance of the Holy Writers. For, let me only make this Remark, that the moſt Literal Tranſlation of the Scriptures, in the moſt natural Signification of the Words, is generally the beſt; and the ſame Punctualneſs which debaſeth other Writings, preſerveth the Spirit and Majeſty of the Sacred Text: It can ſuffer no Improvement from

from human Wit; and we may obſerve, that thoſe who have preſumed to heighten the Expreſſions by a Poetical Tranſlation or Paraphraſe, have ſunk in the Attempt; and all the Decorations of their Verſe, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, have not been able to reach the Dignity, the Majeſty and Solemnity of our Proſe: So that the Proſe of Scripture cannot be improved by Verſe, and even the Divine Poetry is moſt like itſelf in Proſe. One Obſervation more I would leave with Your Lordſhip; *Milton* himſelf, as great a Genius as he was, oweth his Superiority over *Homer* and *Virgil*, in Majeſty of Thought and Splendor of Expreſſion, to the Scriptures: They are the Fountain from which he derived his Light; the Sacred Treaſure that enriched his Fancy, and furniſhed him with all the Truth and Wonders of GOD and his Creation, of Angels

Angels and Men, which no mortal Brain was able either to diſcover or conceive: And in Him, my Lord, of all human Writers, You will meet all his Sentiments and Words raiſed and ſuited to the Greatneſs and Dignity of the Subject.

I have detained Your Lordſhip the longer on this Majeſty of Style, being, perhaps, myſelf carried away with the Greatneſs and Pleaſure of the Contemplation. What I have dwelt ſo much on, with reſpect to Divine Subjects, is more eaſily to be obſerved with reference to Human: For in all Things below Divinity, we are rather able to exceed than fall ſhort; and in Adorning all other Subjects, our Words and Sentiments may riſe in a juſt Proportion to them; Nothing is above the Reach of Man but Heaven; and the ſame Wit can raiſe a *Human* Subject, that only debaſeth a *Divine*.

After

After all theſe Excellencies of Style, in Purity, in Plainneſs and Perſpicuity, in Ornament and Majeſty, are conſidered, a finiſhed Piece of what Kind ſoever muſt ſhine in the Order and Proportion of the Whole; for Light riſeth out of Order, and Beauty from Proportion. In Architecture and Painting, theſe fill and relieve the Eye. A juſt Diſpoſition giveth us a clear View of the Whole at once, and the due Symmetry and Proportion of every Part in itſelf, and of all together, leave no Vacancy in our Thoughts or Eyes; nothing is wanting, every thing is complete, and we are ſatisfied in Beholding.

But, my Lord, when I ſpeak of Order and Proportion, I do not intend any ſtiff and formal Method, but only a proper Diſtribution of the Parts in general, where they

follow in a natural Courſe, and are not confounded with one another. Laying down a Scheme, and marking out the Diviſions and Subdiviſions of a Diſcourſe, are only neceſſary in Syſtems, and ſome Pieces of Controverſy and Argumentation; Your Lordſhip ſees, however, that I have ventured to write without any declared Order; and this is allowable, where the Method opens as You read, and the Order diſcovereth itſelf in the Progreſs of the Subject! But certainly, my Lord, of all Pieces that were ever written in a profeſſed and ſtated Method, and diſtinguiſhed by the Number and Succeſſion of their Parts, our *Engliſh Sermons* are the completeſt in Order and Proportion; the Method is ſo eaſy and natural, the Parts bear ſo juſt a Proportion to one another, that among many others, this may paſs for a peculiar Commendation of them:

For

For thoſe Diviſions and Particulars which obſcure and perplex other Writings, give a clearer Light to Ours. All that I would inſinuate, therefore, is only this, that it is not neceſſary to lay the Method we uſe before the Reader, only to write, and then he will read, in Order.

But it requireth, my Lord, a full Command of the Subject, a diſtinct View to keep it always in Sight, or elſe without ſome Method firſt deſigned, we ſhall be in Danger of loſing it, and wandring after it, till we have loſt ourſelves, and bewildered the Reader.

A preſcribed Method is neceſſary for weaker Heads, but the Beauty of Order is its Freedom and Unconſtraint: It muſt be diſperſed and ſhine in all the Parts thro' the whole Performance, but there is no Neceſſity of Writing in Trammels, when we can move more at eaſe

without them; neither is the Proportion of Writing to be meaſured out like the Proportions of a Horſe, where every Part muſt be drawn in the minuteſt reſpect to the Size and Bigneſs of the reſt; but it is to be taken by the Mind, and formed upon a general View and Conſideration of the Whole. The Statuary that carveth *Hercules* in Stone, or caſts him in Braſs, may be obliged to take his Dimenſions from his Foot, but the Poet that deſcribeth him is not bound up to the Geometer's Rule, nor is an Author under any Obligation to write by the Scale.

Theſe Hints will ſerve to give Your Lordſhip ſome Notion of Order and Proportion; and I muſt not dwell too long upon them, leſt I tranſgreſs the Rules I am laying down.

My

My Lord, I ſhall make no formal Recapitulation of what I have delivered. Out of all theſe Rules together, riſes a juſt Style, and a perfect Compoſition. All the Latitude, that can be admitted, is in the Ornament of Writing; we do not require every Author to ſhine in Gold and Jewels: There is a Moderation to be uſed in the Pomp and Trappings of a Diſcourſe: It is not neceſſary that every Part ſhould be embelliſhed and adorned, but the Decorations ſhould be skilfully diſtributed thro' the Whole: Too full and glaring a Light is offenſive, and confounds the Eyes: In Heaven itſelf there are Vacancies and Spaces between the Stars; and the Day is not leſs Beautiful for being interſperſed with Clouds: They only moderate the Brightneſs of the Sun, and, without diminiſhing from his Splendor, gild and adorn

orn themſelves with his Rays. But to deſcend from the Skies, my Lord, 'tis in Writing as in Dreſs. The richeſt Habits are not always the completeſt, and a Gentleman may make a better Figure in a plain Suit, than in an embroidered Coat. The Dreſs dependeth upon the Imagination, but muſt be adjuſted by the Judgment, contrary to the Opinion of the Ladies, who value nothing but a good Fancy in the Choice of their Cloaths. The firſt Excellence is to write in Purity Plainly, and Clearly; there is no Diſpenſation from theſe, but afterwards You have Your Choice of Colours, and may enliven, adorn, and paint Your Subject as You pleaſe.

In Writing, the Rules have a Relation and Dependence on one another. They are held in one ſocial Bond, and joined, like the Moral

ral Vertues, and Liberal Arts, in a ſort of Harmony and Concord. He that cannot write pure, plain *Engliſh*, muſt never pretend to write at all; 'tis in vain for him to dreſs and adorn his Diſcourſe; the finer he endeavoureth to make it, he maketh it only the more ridiculous. And on the other ſide, let a Man write in the exacteſt Purity, and Propriety of the Language, if he hath not Life and Fire to give his Work ſome Force and Spirit, 'tis nothing but a meer Corpſe, and a lumpiſh unwieldly Maſs of Matter. But every true Genius, who is a perfect Maſter of the Language he writeth in, will let no fitting Ornaments and Decorations be wanting. His Fancy floweth in the richeſt Vein, and giveth his Pieces ſuch lively Colours, and ſo beautiful a Complexion, that You would almoſt ſay his own Blood and

Spirits were transfuſed into the Work.

A perfect Maſtery and Elegance of Style is to be learned from the Common Rules, but muſt be improved by reading the Orators and Poets, and the celebrated Maſters in every Kind; this will give Your Lordſhip a right Taſte, and a true Reliſh; and when You can diſtinguiſh the Beauties of every finiſhed Piece, You will write Yourſelf with equal Commendation.

I do not aſſert, my Lord, that every good Writer muſt have a Genius for Poetry, I know *Tully* is an undeniable Exception; but I will venture to affirm, That a Soul that is not moved with Poetry, and hath no Taſte that way, is too dull and lumpiſh ever to write with any Proſpect of being read. It is a fatal Miſtake, and ſimple Superſtition, to diſcourage Youth from Poetry, and endeavour

endeavour to prejudice them againſt it; if they are of a Poetical Genius, there is no reſtraining them: *Ovid*, Your Lordſhip knoweth, was deaf to his Father's frequent Admonitions; but if they are not quite ſmitten, and bewitched with Love of Verſe, they ſhould be trained to it, to make them Maſters of every kind of Poetry, that by learning to imitate the Originals, they may arrive at a right Conception, and a true Taſte of their Authors; and being able to write in Verſe upon Occaſion, I can aſſure Your Lordſhip, is no Diſadvantage to Proſe; for without reliſhing the one, a Man muſt never pretend to any Taſte of the other.

Taſte, my Lord, is a Metaphor borrowed from the Palate by which we approve or diſlike what we eat and drink, from the Agreeableneſs or Diſagreeableneſs of the Reliſh in our Mouth. Nature directs us in

the Common Uſe, and every body can tell Sweet from Bitter, what is Sharp, or Sour, or Vapid, or Nauſeous; but it requireth Senſes more refined and exerciſed, to diſcover every Taſte that is moſt perfect in its Kind; every Palate is not a Judge of that, and yet Drinking is more uſed than Reading; all that I pretend to know of the Matter, is, my Lord, that Wine ſhould be, like a Style, clear, deep, bright and ſtrong, ſincere and pure, ſound and dry, (as our Advertiſements do well expreſs it) which laſt is a commendable Term, that contains the Juice of the richeſt Spirits, and only keepeth out all Cold and Dampneſs.

It is common to commend a Man, my Lord, for an Ear to Muſic, and a Taſte of Painting, which are nothing but a juſt Diſcernment of what is excellent and moſt perfect

fect in them: The firſt dependeth entirely on the Ear; a Man can never expect to be a Maſter, that hath not an Ear tuned and ſet to Muſic: And You can no more ſing an *Ode* without an Ear, than without a Genius You can write one. Painting, my Lord, we ſhould think, requireth ſome Underſtanding in the Art, and exact Knowledge of the beſt Maſters Manner to be a Judge of it; but this Faculty like the reſt is founded in Nature. Knowledge in the Art, and frequent Converſation with the beſt Originals, will certainly perfect a Man's Judgment; but if there is not a natural Sagacity and Aptneſs, Experience will be of no great Service. A good Taſte is an Argument of a great Soul, as well as a lively Wit. It is the Infirmity of poor Spirits to be taken with every Appearance, and dazzled by every

thing that ſparkles: But to paſs by what the Generality of the World admires, and to be detained with nothing but what is moſt perfect and excellent in its Kind, ſpeaks a ſuperiour Genius, and a true Diſcernment: A new Picture by ſome meaner Hand, where the Colours are freſh and lively, will engage the Eye, but the Pleaſure goes off with looking, and what we ran to at firſt with Eagerneſs, we preſently leave with Indifference: But the old Pieces of *Raphael*, *Michael Angelo*, *Tintoret*, and *Titian*, tho' not ſo inviting at firſt, open to the Eye by Degrees; and the longer and oftner we look, we ſtill diſcover new Beauties, and find new Pleaſure. I am not, my Lord, a Man of ſo much Severity in my Temper, as to allow Your Lordſhip to be pleaſed with nothing but what is in the laſt Perfection: For then, poſſibly,

poſſibly, ſo many are the Infirmities of Writing, beyond other Arts, You never could be pleaſed. There is a wide Difference in being Nice to judge of every Degree of Perfection, and Rigid in refuſing whatever is deficient in any Point. This would only be Weakneſs of Stomach, not any Commendation of a good Palate; a true Taſte judges of Defects as well as Perfections, and the beſt Judges are always the Perſons of the greateſt Candor. They will find none but real Faults, and whereever they commend, the Praiſe is juſtly due.

I have intimated already, that a good Taſte is to be formed by reading the beſt Authors, and when Your Lordſhip ſhall be able to point out their Beauties, to diſcern the brighteſt Paſſages, the Strength and Elegance of their Language, You will always write Yourſelf, and read others.

others by that Standard, and muſt therefore neceſſarily excell.

In *Rome*, My Lord, there were ſome Popular Orators, who with a falſe Eloquence and violent Action carried away the Applauſe of the People; and with us we have ſome Popular Men, who are followed and admired for the Loudneſs of their Voice, and a falſe *Pathos* both in Utterance and Writing: I have been ſometimes in ſome Confuſion to hear ſuch Perſons commended by thoſe of ſuperiour Senſe, who could diſtinguiſh, one would think, between empty, pompous, ſpecious Harangues, and thoſe Pieces in which all the Beauties of Writing are combined. A natural Taſte muſt therefore be improved, like fine Parts, and a great Genius; it muſt be aſſiſted by Art, or it will be eaſily vitiated and corrupted: Falſe Eloquence paſſeth only where True is not underſtood, and

and no body will commend Bad Writers, that is acquainted with Good.

Theſe, my Lord, are only ſome curſory Thoughts on a Subject that will not be reduced to Rules. To treat of a true Taſte in a formal Method, would be very inſipid; it is beſt collected from the Beauties and Laws of Writing, and muſt riſe from every Man's own Apprehenſion and Notion of what he heareth and readeth.

It may be therefore of farther Uſe, and moſt Advantage to Your Lordſhip, as well as a Relief and Entertainment to refreſh Your Spirits in the End of a tedious Diſcourſe, if, beſides mentioning the Claſſic Authors as they fall in my Way, I lay before You ſome of the correcteſt Writers of this Age and the laſt, in ſeveral Faculties upon different Subjects: Not that Your

Lord-

Lordſhip ſhould be drawn into a ſervile Imitation of any of them, but that You may ſee into the Spirit, Force, and Beauty of them all, and form Your Pen from thoſe general Notions of Life and Delicacy, of Fine Thoughts and Happy Words, which riſe to Your Mind upon reading the great Maſters of Style in their ſeveral Ways, and Manner of Excelling.

I muſt beg Leave, therefore, to deferr a little the Entertainment I promiſed, while I endeavour to lead Your Lordſhip into the true Way of *Imitation*, if ever You ſhall propoſe any Original for Your Copy; or, which is infinitely preferable, into a perfect Maſtery of the Spirit and Perfections of every Celebrated Writer, whether Ancient or Modern.

That I may leave Nothing material in this Argument unſaid, among the ſeveral Ways of *Imitation*,

I ſhall take the Liberty of placing *Tranſlation* and *Paraphraſe*, as well as what we more ſtrictly mean by *Imitating* an Author: And becauſe none of theſe come up to what I would have Your Lordſhip underſtand, I ſhall venture to give You my own Views of this Subject, which will appear perhaps in a different Light from any Thing hitherto advanced upon it.

By *Tranſlation*, I mean the Rendring a Foreign Author into our Native Tongue; for I need not extend it to every Verſion from one Language to another.

The beſt Rules of *Tranſlation* Your Lordſhip will find in *Horace*, my Lord *Roſcommon*, Mr. *Dryden*, and the preſent Duke of *Buckingham*; and by acquainting Yourſelf with theſe Excellent Writers, you will be beſt taught to judge when this Task is well performed.

Tranſla-

Tranſlation is a Province every body thinketh himſelf qualified to undertake, but very few are found equal to it: The Mechanic Rules, the Common Laws, which are to be obſerved, are very ſeldom obeyed; and ſometimes a Tranſlation may prove a very bad one, where theſe are moſt ſtrictly regarded. Too ſcrupulous an Obſervation of Rules ſpoileth all ſorts of Writings: It maketh them Stiff and Formal; it betrayeth a Weak and Pedantic Genius, and ſuch nice Writers are fitter to make *Tranſcribers* than *Tranſlators*.

The firſt Qualification of a good *Tranſlator* is an exact Underſtanding, and abſolute Maſtery of the Language he tranſlateth *from*, and the Language he tranſlateth *to*. Few Writers, in Compariſon of the Multitudes that crowd the Preſs, underſtand their Mother-Tongue; and among

mong the more Learned I may venture to ſay, that ſeveral are better acquainted with the *Dead* Languages than the *Living*, and can write *Greek*, or *Latin*, or *Hebrew*, with more Exactneſs than *Engliſh*. *Engliſh* in its full Purity, Elegance, and Perfection, lieth in a few Volumes. The Liſt of Undiſputed Maſters is hardly ſo long as the Liſt of the Court of Aldermen and Lieutenancy of our famous Metropolis; and yet the Muſter-Rolls of the Kingdom fall ſhort of the Catalogue of our Authors.

What I mean by a perfect Underſtanding and Maſtery of Language, I have explained ſome Pages back: But in *Tranſlation* we muſt conſider this Maſtery of Language with reſpect to the Tongues we undertake; and we are not only required to underſtand our own, and a Foreign Tongue as Critics and Grammarians, we

we muſt not only be perfect Maſters of each ſeparately, but we muſt more eſpecially ſtudy the Relation and Compariſon between them. In this do lie the great Art and Difficulty of *Tranſlating*; and not being able to reach the full Compaſs, the Differences, the Proprieties, and Beauties of one Language, is the Foundation of all Faulty Rendring into another.

And this Rule is to be obſerved not only with regard to any Language in general, but alſo with ſpecial reference to any Authors of it in particular. With regard to any Language in general, we muſt, upon comparing it with our own, weigh all the Differences and Agreements between them, examine their ſeveral Qualities and Proprieties, and ſearch into the Strength and Compaſs of one and the other, that we may ſee whether they be Barren or

Abun-

Abundant, Cloſe or Diffuſe, and how near they can be brought to one another. And among the ſeveral Writers in a Foreign Tongue, we muſt acquaint ourſelves with their ſeveral Characters, and different Manners: Whether they be Copious or Conciſe, Flowing or Reſtrained, Plain or Florid, and ſo on through all the Variety and Differences of Style; and then we are to conſider how our Language will beſt anſwer the different Way and Manner of thoſe Authors we propoſe to render. For if we hope to tranſlate Foreign Authors with Succeſs, we muſt know perfectly how to extend and contract our Language, how to raiſe and adorn our Style, and how to write in the plaineſt and moſt ſimple Expreſſions.

Where a Foreign Tongue is Elegant and Expreſſive, Cloſe and Compact, beyond our Reach, we muſt ſtudy

ſtudy the utmoſt Force of our Language, and look out for Words as Beautiful and Comprehenſive, as Apt and Significant, as can be found, to render not only the Senſe, but the Manner and very Expreſſion of our Authors: Where the Language we tranſlate from is more rich and copious than our own, we muſt try the utmoſt Compaſs and Variety of Expreſſion to render an Author that aboundeth with Plenty and Choice of Words to the ſame Senſe, while perhaps we have but two or three that will anſwer to all the Variety of his. But if an Author be looſe and diffuſe in his Style, the Tranſlator hath an eaſy Task, and needs only regard the Propriety of the Language; and his Tranſlation may eaſily exceed the Original, if ſuch Originals be worth tranſlating.

By attending to theſe Conſiderations of the Difference of Languages with

with reſpect to each other, Your Lordſhip will quickly enter into the whole Extent and Compaſs of them, and fully underſtand the utmoſt Reach and Strength of Your Native Tongue; what it is able to bear, and how far, and how well it is able to expreſs the peculiar Manner, Beauty, and Propriety of any Authors whatſoever.

But there is ſtill a greater Difficulty remaining upon Tranſlators, which riſes from the Peculiarities every Language hath to itſelf, that are ſo much the Character and Property of that Language, as not to be render'd or made common to any other. We have ſeveral beautiful Forms of Expreſſion in *Engliſh*, which 'tis impoſſible for the moſt perfect and comprehenſive Languages to reach; and the Native Graces of every Tongue are ſuch as cannot be copied by Tranſlation. When you change the Language,

guage, you loſe the Beauty: The bare Conſtruction and Carcaſs may remain, but the Features and the Life are fled. When, therefore, you meet with any Expreſſions that will not be render'd without this Diſadvantage, the Thing to be regarded, is the Beauty and Elegance of the Original; and Your Lordſhip, without minding any thing but the Senſe of the Author, is to conſider how that Paſſage would be beſt expreſſed in *Engliſh*, if You were not tied up by the Words of the Original; and You may depend upon it, that if You can find a Way of expreſſing the ſame Senſe as beautifully in *Engliſh*, You have hit the true Tranſlation, tho' You cannot conſtrue the Words backward and forward into one another; for then You certainly have tranſlated as the Author, were he an *Engliſhman*, would have wrote: For if there be

a beautiful Way of Expreſſion peculiar to the *Greeks* or *Romans*, which our Language cannot reach by any Thing that can be termed a Tranſlation with regard to rendring the Words; and if there be in our Language a Way of Expreſſion peculiarly *Engliſh*, which giveth us the full Senſe of the *Greek* or *Latin*, we do then truly tranſlate, as we may preſume the Authors would have wrote, and reach the Beauty, as well as Senſe, of their Expreſſions, tho' the Words in *Engliſh* do by no means agree to the Grammatical Conſtruction of the Original.

But this Rule concerning thoſe Beauties and Elegancies, which are peculiar to every Language by itſelf, will be farther explain'd, as I proceed to ſome other Obſervations neceſſary for *Tranſlators*.

For, my Lord, we are as yet but in the Entrance. Underſtanding the

Languages, is no more than the Ground-Work of Tranſlation; and being acquainted with the Force and Compaſs of Foreign Tongues and our Own, both as conſider'd in themſelves, and compared with each other, are Qualifications, which ought rather to be ſuppoſed, than required; and yet how Few are there to be found even ſo far qualified for this Work? And how many among us have ventured upon *Tranſlation*, without underſtanding the *Original?* To this, my Lord, are owing Tranſlations at ſecond Hand; and our Pretenders to Learning have made their ſmall Knowledge of the *Modern* Tongues ſupply their Ignorance of the *Ancient*. What muſt we expect from thoſe, who pretend to tranſlate *Greek* and *Latin* from the *French*, for Inſtance, but to find the *Tranſlation* at double Diſtance from the *Original?* It is impoſſible to ſee into

into the Excellencies and Perfections of thoſe Languages thro' ſuch a *Medium*, or at all to reach the Cloſeneſs and Expreſſiveneſs of the *Greek* and *Latin*, from a Language that muſt uſe five Words for one, and diffuſe the Strength and Spirit of a ſingle Page into ten. It is inconceivable with me how ſuch *Tranſlators* can be endured: It is certain they muſt be intolerable to thoſe who are acquainted with the Originals; and no Account of their Acceptance can be given, but that there is ſo much Pleaſure, Wit, and Beauty in the *Claſſics*, that 'tis impoſſible to tranſlate them ſo ill, as utterly to deface them, and quite ſpoil the Entertainment they afford thoſe who are Strangers to them in their Native Tongue. Such Tranſlations are like the Adulteration of the nobleſt Wines, where ſomething of the Colour, Spirit, and Flavour, will remain;

main; and while they pleaſe ſome injudicious Palates, do only raiſe the Indignation of every good Taſte, to ſee the Spirit of the fineſt Authors ſo debaſed and corrupted. I do not pretend to judge of the *French Tranſlations* myſelf: Be they what they will, ours, that are taken from them, muſt be bad. Nor am I Maſter enough of the *French* Tongue, to determine upon their Performances; but I ſpeak after the beſt Judges, and the beſt Writers our Nation hath produced. The *French*, my Lord, have indeed taken worthy Pains to make Claſſic Learning ſpeak their Language; and if they have not ſucceeded, it muſt be imputed to that Circumlocution, to a certain Talkativeneſs and Airineſs that are repreſented in their Tongue, which will never agree with the *Silence* and *Sedateneſs* of the *Romans*, or with the *Solemnity* and *Expreſſiveneſs* of

of the *Greeks*. Our *Engliſh*, of all *Modern* Languages that have been cultivated, is upon Experience and Compariſon juſtly thought moſt capable of all the Beauty, Strength, and Significancy of the *Greek* and *Latin*; and we may juſtly hope to ſee the true *Greek* and *Roman* Spirit transfuſed into our Language, when the Tranſlations are undertaken by ſuch Hands as are every way equal to the Task. We have noble Specimens in the Tranſlation of ſeveral celebrated Pieces; and if *Dryden* hath failed in ſome Parts of *Virgil*, we may, in part, aſcribe it to his uſing, as 'tis ſaid, ſome *French* and *Foreign* Aſſiſtance, and partly to ſome Defects of our Language, for he was an Abſolute Maſter of its whole Reach and Compaſs; but chiefly to the inimitable Perfections and Elegance of the Author, who hath weighed and choſen every Word

that is moſt beautiful and ſignificant, and beſt adapted to the Purpoſe it is uſed for. *Virgil* is not only the greateſt and correcteſt of the *Roman* Poets, but of the *Roman* Writers; and as he is numerous, various, and rich in his Verſe and Expreſſions, his Expreſſions are ſo full and abundant with his Senſe, his Senſe is ſo crowded, and yet ſo clear in the admirable Choice of his Words, that unleſs the *Engliſh* were equal to the *Roman*, and the *Tranſlator* to the *Poet*, it is impoſſible but that the Natural Diſadvantages of our Tongue muſt appear in the Tranſlation: And yet, my Lord, give me Leave to ſay, in Commendation of Mr. *Dryden*, let who will undertake that *Mighty Work*, we ſhall never ſee it better performed in the Whole; and thoſe who may excell him, where they obſerve he hath failed, will fall below

low him in a thouſand Inſtances where he hath excelled.

This, my Lord, I have only touched upon by the Way; and if the beſt and greateſt Maſters fail, what muſt we think of all meaner Tranſlators? We can only ſit down and wonder, that *Ogilby*, and his *Brethren* the *Ogilbys* of every Age, could ever find *Subſcriptions* and Encouragement, or that Men of Senſe ſhould ever be induced to buy what they never could endure to read.

But it is Time to proceed to what is farther neceſſary to quallfy a Man for Tranſlation. Underſtanding the Languages he attempts, as I have opened it, is no ſuperficial eaſy Matter: I wiſh our Tranſlators were only ſo far prepared for their Work: But, my Lord, I muſt farther obſerve, that thoſe who only underſtand the Languages, are neither fit nor able to tranſlate.

For it is not an exact Skill and Knowledge of the Languages alone, tho' this be a Fundamental Qualification absolutely required in this Undertaking; but he that entereth upon this Province with any Hopes of Glory and Success, must, besides the Language, enter into the very Life and Beauty, and Genius of his Author. With me it passeth for a Maxim, that no one can translate an Author, who can't write like him, and a Man must be of the same Spirit with the Author he attempteth. *Creech*, who translated *Lucretius* so well, miscarried in *Horace* as much as he succeeded in the other: And his *Idylliums* of *Theocritus* are as much below his *Manilius*, as the Fields are below the Stars. A Person that writeth like *Sallust*, or, to put the Opposition in the farthest Extreme, like *Tacitus*, will hardly make a good Translator of *Livy*.

Sir

Sir *Roger L'Eſtrange*, who was a perfect Maſter of the familiar, the facetious and jocular Style, fell into his proper Province, when he pitched upon *Eraſmus* and *Æſop*. *Tully's Offices* were ſuitable enough for their Plainneſs and Familiarity to his Genius; but he could never riſe to the Solemnity and Dignity of his Orations. He was neither Orator nor Hiſtorian, his Talent was Banter and Ridicule; and how well qualified he was for the Tranſlation of *Joſephus*, among a thouſand other Levities and low Expreſſions, we may judge from the Character of *Herod*, who was one *that would keep Touch neither with God, nor Man*, according to his Tranſlation. Thoſe who will venture upon Authors of different Ways, muſt be of a very comprehenſive Genius, if they ſucceed. Every Man, who is a confeſſed Maſter in any Kind of Proſe, or Poetry,

may tranſlate any Authors of the ſame Kind with Reputation: But it is an univerſal Genius that muſt attempt them all. Mr. *Prior* is equal to all the Parts of *Horace*, and may, at the ſame time, attempt *Homer* and *Virgil* with a Spirit not inferiour to the great *Originals*. Mr. *Addiſon* ſeems peculiarly formed to maintain the Majeſty of theſe great Poets, and aſſert the Character of his great Maſter *Virgil*, in an Exactneſs, Strength, and Beauty, like his own. My Lord *Hallifax* is a Name ſacred to the Muſes; and he that writeth with a *Claſſic* Spirit, may, when he pleaſes, make the ancient Poets ſpeak, as if they wrote and compoſed in *Engliſh*. Mr. *Granville* I ſhould call by a Title proper to his Name and Blood; but a Regard to Chronology muſt make theſe Additions of a Piece with the reſt, that no Confuſion may happen to future Critics by the Mixture or Change

Change of Titles: And whenever he ſhall adorn our Language with ſome of the nobleſt and choiceſt Pieces the *Greek* or *Roman* Poets have produced, I will venture to propheſy, that my Lord *Lanſdowne* will be as Celebrated as Mr. *Granville*, and his Tranſlations equal, what hardly any body but himſelf can do, his own Originals. Giving Warning once more, that theſe Additions are written above a Year and ſix Months after the firſt Edition, I will preſume to mention another Gentleman, whoſe Writings I was not acquainted with when I firſt compoſed the Work that goeth before and followeth, and whoſe noble Deſign I was a Stranger to when I made the Preface to this *Diſſertation*. And this I do in the firſt place by way of Apology, for wanting ſo bright an Ornament in the Liſt of our *Engliſh* Poets; and in

the next place, out of a charitable Regard to the Critics Heads, and myſelf, that they may not firſt crack their Brains to reconcile ſeeming Inconſiſtencies of Time, and then, for want of the true Diſcovery, condemn me for a Blunderer. So cautiouſly muſt he tread, who is afraid of being handled as they will handle him! And now, my Lord, after all this Preamble, I may venture to name Mr. *Pope*, whoſe Performances ſhine in all the Beauty and Perfections of the greateſt Maſters; and from his Hands we expect to receive the great *Homer* like himſelf.

Theſe Gentlemen, and ſuch as theſe only, are qualified for Tranſlation: It is the hardeſt Province in all the Parts of Writing; tho' none but a good Author can make a good Tranſlator, yet it is more difficult to *tranſlate* well, than to *write* well. Every great Maſter in

Proſe

Proſe or Poetry is not able to tranſlate every Author; and thoſe Authors he finds moſt ſuitable to his own Genius, coſt him more Sweat, and Pains, and Conſideration, than twice the Number of Lines of his own compoſing. 'Tis no exceeding Labour for every great Genius to exert, and manage, and maſter his own Spirit; but 'tis almoſt an inſuperable Task to compaſs, to equal, and command the Spirit of another Man. Yet this is what every Tranſlator taketh upon himſelf to do, and muſt do, if he deſerves the Name. He muſt put himſelf into the Place of his Authors, not only be Maſter of their Manner, as to their Style, the Periods, Turn, and Cadence of their Writings, but he muſt bring himſelf to their Habit and Way of Thinking, and have, if poſſible, the ſame Train of Notions in his Head, which

which gave Birth to thoſe they have ſelected and placed in their Works.

And now, my Lord, I can hardly forbear Expoſtulations upon this Head, that every Idle, Half-witted, Half-learned *Noddle*, which the World is ſatisfied is not fit for an *Author*, ſhould preſently think *itſelf* well enough qualified for a *Tranſlator.*

Let no one blame me for carrying my Notions of Tranſlation ſo high; I have done it to reſcue the Claſſics out of the Hands of every ignorant Pretender, that they may not be mangled and abuſed in their *Tranſmigration* from one Language to another: For, as if their Genius were changed, inſtead of being transferred, we are not ſo happy (pardon the Alluſion) as to ſee a Lion's Spirit in an Aſs's Body; but the Spirit of a Lion ſeems

ſeems *Tranſlated* into the Spirit of an Aſs.

My Lord, the next Way of *Imitation* is *Paraphraſe*. *Tranſlation* is the neareſt of all: 'Tis drawing immediately from the Life, and copying every Feature to all Advantage and Exactneſs: But *Paraphraſe* holdeth the Original at a more diſtant View, and taketh as much Freedom to mend, or alter it, tho' it be not really either mended or altered for the better, as a Painter muſt, who would compliment a Lady of Fifty with a Face of Fifteen.

Paraphraſe, my Lord, (ſtrictly ſpeaking) is enlarging upon an Author to explain his Meaning; but it is ſo confounded with *Periphraſis*, or Circumlocution, that 'tis hard to diſtinguiſh them: The firſt relates to Things, the other to Words; one gives the Meaning of

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an Author in the Way of Explication, the other multiplies Words without enlarging the Senſe. I am obliged to d ſtinguiſh them at my ſetting out, becauſe, as I proceed, I muſt ſpeak of them as if they were the ſame, and conſider *Paraphraſe* not as it is in itſelf, but as it ſtands in the preſent Practice; where, without regard to its Original Deſign, it is changed into *Cicumlocution.*

So much by way of Precaution, that none may triumph in their Criticiſms upon a fancy'd Diſcovery, that the Author took *Paraphraſe* and *Periphraſe* for the ſame Thing, when the Fault lieth wholly in thoſe Verſifying Gentlemen, who, without regarding either, have taken one for the other.

Paraphraſe then, according to Modern Uſage, is a round-about Way of Tranſlating, invented, I ſuppoſe,

poſe, to help the Barrenneſs and Poverty, which Tranſlators, overlooking in themſelves, have apprehended in our Tongue. This hath opened a Way to many Irregularities, and greater Licentiouſneſs, than even Poets can claim; and tho' ſome Pieces of this Kind are admirably finiſhed, yet thoſe that are really Good, are hardly enow to compenſate for the Bad. Some have had the Vanity to imagine they improved their Authors by the Liberties they took: But 'tis only their own Fondneſs and Conceit that puts ſuch Fancies in their Head; for what they call Improvement, is generally either ſpinning out their Author's Senſe, till 'tis wiredrawn, that is, weak and ſlender; or elſe 'tis taking a Hint, and running away with a Notion that never entered into the Author's Thoughts. Our *Paraphraſe* Men commonly take

take ſuch a Compaſs about the Senſe of their Authors, that they never come near it; or, if they chance to catch it, they never leave it till 'tis quite loſt and diſſipated. Nothing betrays the Weakneſs of their Heads ſo much as this Practice, and their Author's Senſe is certainly too ſtrong for their Brains, when they can't bear it without qualifying and mixing it with their own.

I know the general Pretence is avoiding a literal *Tranſlation*; but there is a great deal of Difference between a literal *Tranſlation* and a *Paraphraſe*. A literal Tranſlation is never to be avoided, but when it obſcures, or debaſes the Original; and a *Paraphraſe* upon that Pretence ought never to be uſed, but when a literal *Tranſlation* is impracticable. I remember *Horace*'s Rule very well; and tho' there is no Neceſſity of

Ren-

Rendring Word for Word, like ſome of your *Faithful Tranſlators*; yet, where the Language will bear it, and the Senſe and Spirit of an Author can be fully expreſſed, I take the moſt literal *Tranſlations* to be the beſt, as well as trueſt. It requires a great Genius, and a ſtrong Judgment to play with an Author's Senſe, and run Diviſions upon his Words. It may paſs well enough if they were only to be ſet to Muſick, and even then 'twould be but weakening the Senſe to improve the Sound.

If we will ſpeak ſtrictly of this Performance with reference to the Poets eſpecially, *Paraphraſing* is but another Word for *Tranſlating*. When the Language of the Original cannot be rendred in ſo many Words, or when a bare Tranſlation cannot give the full Force and Beauty of the Original, we muſt take a Com-

Compaſs to expreſs them as near as we can; and when we have ſo expreſſed them, the *Paraphraſe* is indeed no more than the true *Tranſlation*, according to the Obſervation I made upon Rendring the *Peculiarities* of any Language, which holds in this Caſe as well as in that. But for farther Enterprizes upon an Author, for enlarging his Senſe, and building Fancies of our own upon his Foundation, we may call it *Paraphraſing* if we will; but we ſhould more properly term it *Changing*, or *Adding*, or *Patching*, or *Piecing*, or any thing but *Paraphraſing*. For generally it hath Nothing within the *Etymology* of *Paraphraſe*, but being *beſides the Meaning*.

As to the Pretences for this Practice, they are either improving the Author, or explaining his Meaning. As to the firſt, I have confuted it pretty well already, and ſhall only add,

add, that the beſt Writers are above Improvement, ſuch as *Virgil* and *Horace*, who yet have ſuffered moſt from this Vanity and Conceit; and that whatever Authors want to be improved, are not worthy to be Tranſlated. As for the other Pretence, it is very juſt and fair, and the Experiment is at all Times allowable in the *Fragments*, and broken Pieces, and obſcure Paſſages of ancient Poets, who cannot be underſtood without ſome Connexion of Parts, ſome Supply of their Vacancies, and the Advantage of new Light, to guide us thro' the darker Paſſages of thoſe Authors.

But here we are not at Liberty to treat theſe decayed, and broken, or dark Pieces of Antiquity, as we pleaſe: And the Rules of *Paraphraſe* are the more ſtrictly to be obſerved, the more we may ſeem to be left to our Diſcretion. 'Tis eaſy enough to

to keep up to our Author, when we have him always in View; but 'tis more difficult to trace him from his *Remains*, and purſue him thro' all the *Ruins* and *Obſcurity* of Time. Now, "The general Rules are, "that all our Sentiments do na- "turally riſe from our Author, "and that we maintain his Cha- "racter, and bring Nothing of "our Own that is either unlikely, "or unworthy of Him to ſay.

Mr. *Cowley* hath ſucceeded admirably in his Paraphraſe upon *Pindar*, but then he was of a Genius equal to his Author: He hath no Sentiment but what naturally riſes from the Original, and is every way worthy the *Theban* Poet to have thought and ſung. But 'tis a dangerous Enterprize, and too ſtrong for weak Heads to try the Heights, and fathom the Depths of his Flights. The Rapidity of his Motion, the

Torrent

Torrent of his Verſe, the ſudden Turns and Sallies of his Thought, require a Genius like his own to purſue them, while ſhallow Brains grow giddy in a Moment, and the firſt Step carries them beyond their Depth, and hurries them down the Stream. *Horace* hath given us fair Warning; and if any Dabler in Poetry dares venture upon the Experiment, he will only break his Brains, and *give a New Name to ſome Room in Bedlam.* I would intimate the ſame Caution with reſpect to all the other Celebrated Maſters of Antiquity, tho' their Senſe doth not lie ſo deep, and their Flights are not ſo bold and violent as *Pindar's*, That our ordinary Adventurers in *Pindaric*, *Paraphraſe*, and *Tranſlation*, may have ſome Regard for their Reputation, if they have none for their Necks, and never beſtride the Muſes Horſe, till they

they are ſure they can keep their Seat, that is, till they can manage him with as much Strength and Dexterity, as his old Maſters; or, which is all one in plain *Engliſh*, till they can write up to the Dignity and Character of their Authors.

The Fragments and Remains of the Ancient Poets may be thought impracticable, and are perhaps too difficult for any Paraphraſe to complete, unleſs from the Hints we meet with, and the Character that is left us of the Authors, we could frame a Poem in Imitation of their Way. *Horace* hath given us ſome ſhort Notices of *Alcæus*, *Steſichorus*, *Simonides*, *Sappho*, and *Archilochus*: And we meet with ſome farther Mention, and ſome Fragments of them all, except *Alcæus*, in *Longinus*'s excellent Treatiſe. Their Remains have been collected by learned Men; and if here and there

there we find ſome Pieces more entire, we muſt from them endeavour to acquaint ourſelves with their Way and Manner, and imitate them as well as we can, when we take Occaſion from ſome broken Parts to fancy what the Poet ſaid in the Lines that are loſt. As your *Antiquaries* make out the moſt ancient *Medals* from a Letter, and ſome Pieces of Letters, that are here and there with great Difficulty to be diſcerned upon the *Face* and *Reverſe*.

But with Reſpect to all other Poets, whoſe Works have deſcended entire to their Poſterity, and whoſe Writings can be underſtood without ſupplying either new Light or Connexion, I hope all that pretend to be of the Poetical Family, will have the Modeſty to think reverently of their Fore-fathers, and ſuffer them to reſt in the quiet Poſ-

feſſion of their own Wit and Beauty, without Addition or Diminution. *Tranſlate* they may; and where *Tranſlation* is impracticable, they may *Paraphraſe*: But it is intolerable, that under a Pretence of *Paraphraſing* and *Tranſlating*, a Way ſhould be ſuffered of treating Authors to a manifeſt Diſadvantage, only for the Sake of gratifying the vitiated Taſte and fooliſh Fancies of ſome Poetaſters, that fondly dream they can write better than the beſt Writers in the World.

After ſo many Words upon *Tranſlation* and *Paraphraſe*, let us paſs, if Your Lordſhip pleaſes, to what is more properly meant by Imitation.

" This, in general, is no more " than propoſing ſome excellent " Writer for a Pattern, and endea- " vouring to copy his Perfections

" in

"in the moſt diſtinguiſhing Parts "of his Character." Among the *Romans*, *Horace* is the Standard of *Lyric*, and *Virgil* of *Epic* Poetry; and thoſe Moderns who could ever flatter themſelves to ſucceed in either, have propoſed theſe great Maſters with old *Homer* and the *Grecian Lyrics* for their Pattern. If they wrote after *Horace* and *Virgil* in *Latin*, they ſtudied their Expreſſion as well as Thought; if in their Native Tongue, they have formed themſelves as near as poſſible upon thoſe great Models. I remember no Writer that ever pleaſed himſelf with any diſtant Attempts of the *Epic* Kind, but he gave us, at leaſt, the Sketch, the Skeleton, the Draught, the Mechaniſm, whatever we call it, of *Homer* and *Virgil*, and you might ſee the Anatomy of thoſe Poems, if you could ſee nothing elſe. For *Lyrics*, I cannot take up-

on myſelf to recollect above one Perſon who ever ventured upon them, without having *Horace*, or the *Grecians*, in his Eye; and he hath carefully preſerved the Modern Diſtinction between *Songs* and *Odes*, as if they were as diſtant in Meaning, as they are in Sound and Him. I might inſtance farther in the *Epiſtolatory* and *Satyrical* Way, in *Proſe* as well as *Verſe*, in *Greek* as well as *Latin*, in *Orators* and *Hiſtorians*, in *Philoſophers* and *Moraliſts*, in every Thing but your *Critics* and *Commentators*: For I think no body ever thought it worth while to mind either the Elegance of their Style, or the Brightneſs of their Thoughts: But I ſpare Your Lordſhip the Trouble, and myſelf the Labour of going thro' the Subject in every Particular. It will be more pleaſing, and I hope as profitable, to run it over in ſome general Reflexions.

And

And I would in the firſt place reflect upon a Way of *Imitation* I can by no means admit of, and that is adapting *Ancient Authors* to *Modern* Times, and making *Horace*, *Juvenal*, *Perſius*, *&c.* not only ſpeak our Language, but know our Manners. I am ſenſible Mankind is the ſame in all Ages: The ſame Vanity, Villany, and Folly, are always to be found, and the ſame Correction may expoſe the Knaves and Fools of one Age as well as another; but this Fancy muſt not preſently paſs for *Imitation*. Theſe ſort of Performances are, generally ſpeaking, as *Faithful Tranſlations* as any, only *Modern* Names are inſerted in the Place of the *Ancient*, and nothing is changed but the Scene and the Actors: I have no Quarrel to the Practice; it may be to the *Engliſh* Reader a more divert-

ing and more uſeful Way of Tranſlating.

I cannot help taking Notice of another Way of *Imitation*, which, if I had a Mind to be formal, I ſhould ſay, differeth from the former, as *Paraphraſe* from *Tranſlation*. Your Lordſhip ſhall never take a Voyage, but if You have a Poet of Your Acquaintance, he will compliment You, as all Lords have been complimented upon the like Occaſion, with *Horace*'s good Wiſhes to his Friend *Virgil*: And it will be a great Chance, if he prove too ſtrict an *Imitator*, and doth not conſider his Compaſs, but he prayeth for a Wind in Your Teeth. Perhaps he may not wonder at the Hardineſs of the Man who firſt ventured to Sea, and may ſpare thoſe fine Reflexions *Horace* maketh on the Folly and Raſhneſs of Mankind; and inſtead of ſuch Digreſſions, may

may only wiſh Your Lordſhip well Home again: But for that, my Lord, he may, when time comes, do as he pleaſeth; only I cannot allow one Way or the other for a proper *Imitation*, whether he follows *Horace* quite through, or leaveth him at his Digreſſion; and my Reaſons are at hand, as ſoon as I have given one Inſtance more. I believe no King hath been out of the Land ſince Writing of *Odes* came in Faſhion, but he hath been intreated Home in the ſame Prayers *Horace* uſed to *Auguſtus*. I remember very well, the *Ode* I ſpeak of was frequently imitated in King *William*'s Days, tho' the Compliment was unluckily ſpoiled: For putting *France* in the room of *Parthia*, *Scythia*, and *Germany*, I may venture to ſay, for his Majeſty's Honour, that we had leſs Reaſon to fear the *French* when he was *Abroad*, than when he was at *Home*.

Theſe *Odes* I have mentioned, may, perhaps, be held at ſome farther Diſtance in the *Tranſlation* or *Paraphraſe*, than other Pieces that are adapted to our Times: But ſtill they are no more *Imitations*, than it can be an *Imitation* to ſay the ſame Thing in Effect in *Engliſh*, which the Poet had expreſſed ſo much better in *Latin*. It is all the while treading too cloſely in his Steps; and tho' by a Figure we call *Imitating Tranſcribing*, yet he that *tranſcribeth* and calleth it *Imitation*, will be called, if not a *Tranſcriber*, a *Plagiary*. In Moral and in Chriſtian Vertues we ought to *tranſcribe*, or *imitate* ſuch illuſtrious Examples as have gone before us: But by this is not underſtood an Imitation of their particular Actions, but of their Vertues in general. And ſo I ſay for an Author, it is not tying ourſelves up to the Circumſtances of his Thoughts

Thoughts and Expreſſions, it is not adapting his Occaſion of Writing to ours, or ours to his; but it is Copying after his Beauties, his Way and Manner at large, that maketh the *Imitation*. Suppoſe one of theſe *Imitators* I have been ſpeaking of ſhould propoſe to *imitate Horace* in *Latin* upon one of theſe Occaſions, I believe he would not think fit to tranſcribe the *Ode*; and why ſhould putting it into *Engliſh* paſs for *Imitation*, when tranſcribing it only with the neceſſary Alterations would be intolerable. In Actions I may imitate the beſt Men punctually if I can, tho' I am not obliged to do ſo: For Actions are of common Concern, and any one may do what another hath done. But Writings are a Property; and while I pretend to *imitate*, I muſt take Care not to *ſteal*. Writing an *Ode* upon the ſame Subject and Occaſion as

Horace hath done, is ſo far an Imitation of him; but taking his Plan, and borrowing his Thoughts, is making too free with him to call it *Imitation:* And yet, in the common Way, we either write out of him, and ſo pretend to *imitate* him, or out of our own Fancies, and ſo do not *imitate* him at all. But to come off from theſe grave Diſquiſitions, my Lord, I would clear the Point by one Inſtance more, which I think will put it out of all Diſpute. There is a certain *Ode* wherein *Horace* is pleaſed to hold a Dialogue with an old Acquaintance called *Lydia.* This *Ode* hath, I fancy, eſcaped no body that ever attempted any: It hath been *Tranſlated*, *Paraphraſed*, and *Imitated* by a hundred Hands; and I dare venture a Wager, that when all the *Tranſlations*, *Paraphraſes*, and *Imitations*, are compared together, ſtrip them only

of

of their Titles at Top, it will puzzle a good Critic to define which is *Imitation*, *Paraphraſe*, or *Tranſlation*, provided always, that *Strephon* and *Cloe*, or the Names of any other Nymphs and Swains, be only underſtood as the *Engliſh* for *Horace* and his Friend *Lyde*.

If *Horace* himſelf had been called upon to add a *fifth* Book of *Odes* to the *fourth* (for I do not ſpeak of his *Epodes*) as he was commanded by *Auguſtus* to add a *fourth* to the *third*, he would doubtleſs have *imitated* his former Pieces, and the youngeſt Child had carried the ſame Reſemblance of the Father, which could be found in any of its elder Brethren: But he never would have copied from any of his old Pieces, nor fancied, that when the ſame Occaſion offered, the ſame Verſes, with ſome little Alteration, and the ſame Thought with another Appli-

cation, would have ſerved: The Subject of the *Ode* might be the ſame, but his Method of treating it would be different: He would write indeed like himſelf; You ſhould know it to be *Horace*'s Production; and ſo far he would *imitate* himſelf: "You ſhould ſee the "ſame Way and Manner, the "ſame Beauty and Sprightlineſs of "Thought, the ſame agreeable "Mixture of the Serious and Jovial, "the ſame Fineneſs of Reflexion, "the ſame Wiſdom in Mirth, and "Morality in his Pleaſures, all "cloathed in the ſame Eaſe and "Elegance of Words in the ſame *Cu-*"*rious Felicity* of Expreſſion, which "do all together make up the diſtin-"guiſhing Character of his *Odes*.

To *imitate Horace* then, is to write as himſelf would have done upon the ſame Occaſions, on which we propoſe him to Imitation. We muſt

muſt have the ſame Turn of Thought, the ſame Faculty of Expreſſion, and, in a word, the ſame Genius with himſelf.

I might inſtance in the other great Maſters of Antiquity, and fix the Laws of Imitation from the Practice of the *Roman* Orators and Poets, in copying from the *Greek*. *Tully*, in his *Orations*, formed himſelf upon the *Grecian* Models, and, as he declares under the Perſon of *Craſſus*, he improved the *Roman* Language by tranſlating, explaining, and imitating the beſt Orations of their greateſt Orators in the beſt and choiceſt Expreſſions, and found this Advantage in *Imitation*, that he often adopted the *Grecian* Language into his own ſo happily, and ſo clearly, with that peculiar Turn, that the Words ſhould appear New, yet not Unuſual, but very fit and proper to his Auditors.

If

If Your Lordſhip would know what *Tully* means by *Imitation*, he acquaints us with his Sentiments of it in the Perſon of *Antonius*. " That " we conſider well in the firſt place, " what Authors are worthy our *Imi-* " *tation*: That we regard the chief- " eſt Excellencies of the Authors " we would *imitate*: That by fre- " quent Practice and Exercitations, " we form them, as it were, with- " in us: That we do not, like ſome " *Imitators*, copy the eaſieſt Parts, " or even the moſt glaring and no- " torious Paſſages, which are none " of the fineſt, or moſt correct, and " ſo fall into the Vices and Singu- " larities of our Authors: Then he " runs through the ſeveral Authors " of ſeveral Ages, gives us a ſhort " Character of them as he goes a- " long, and ſhows the Practice of " *Imitation* to have been formed up- " on the Taſte of every Age, and the

" Man-

" Manner of the moſt celebrated
" Maſters in their ſeveral Times.

I have not troubled myſelf, nor would I trouble Your Lordſhip with formal Citations: I have only made an Extract of *Tully*'s Senſe ſo far as relates to the Subject now before me. To the *Orator* I will only add the great *Grammarian*, and give *Quintilian*'s Sentiments in few Words:
" That *Imitation* is not ſo much co-
" pying after, or trying to reſemble
" another Author in his Concepti-
" ons and Style, as an Emulation
" plainly to rival him in his own
" Way, and to excell him where he
" hath moſt excelled.

And now, my Lord, to confirm Your Lordſhip in theſe Notions: *Plato* in Proſe is the *Imitator* of *Homer*'s Diction in Verſe; not of his Poetical Fancies, but of the Copiouſneſs, the Majeſty, and Loftineſs of his Style. In *Latin*, *Terence* imitated

imitated *Menander*, yet not as a *Tranſcriber*, or *Tranſlator*, but ſo as to raiſe a new Fabrick with the old Materials. *Horace* hath imitated the *Grecian Lyrics*, and mixed (as I have ſaid) the Soft, the Amorous, the Jovial, with the Grave and Sublime. *Virgil* too, he is an *Imitator* of the *Grecians*, of *Theocritus* in his *Paſtorals*; *Heſiod* is hardly worth mentioning with his *Georgics*; but above all, he is the Profeſſed *Imitator* of *Homer*, out of whoſe Poems he hath formed a *Third*, diſtinct from *either*, and more perfect than *Both*.

I have ſaid enough of *Virgil* in the Beginning of the Book; and what I have here added concerning him and others, is only to give ſuch Examples of *Imitation*, as will beſt inſtruct us what *Imitation* is; and when we can do the ſame Juſtice to the *Roman*, as they have done to the *Grecian* Writers; when without ſtealing

ſtealing from them, we can plainly rival them in their own Thoughts and Expreſſions, and tell the ſame Story, or write upon the ſame Subject better than they have done; then we may propoſe them for our Patterns, and undertake them upon any Occaſion we pleaſe, keep the Originals in our View, and profeſs to *imitate* them without *Tranſlating* from them, or *Paraphraſing* on them, or *Tranſcribing them* into *Modern* Names and Places.

" This then is *Imitation*, when " we are poſſeſſed of the Expreſ- " ſion, Way of Thinking, and the " Genius of any Author, in ſuch " an abſtracted Manner, as without " writing out of him, or making uſe " of him for particular Thoughts " and Phraſes, we can write in his " Way, and after his Manner; ſo " that any one, who is a proper " Judge, may ſay at Sight, *This is*

Horatian,

" *Horatian, this is Terentian, this is*
" *Virgilian*; tho' perhaps the very
" Words, as they ſtand in our Wri-
" tings, are not to be found in the
" Authors we propoſe to imitate.

I have ſaid little concerning *Imitation* with reſpect to the Language of the Original, becauſe I think it extremely difficult to *imitate* the *Greeks* and *Romans* in their own Tongue with any Hopes of Succeſs, it being impoſſible for us at this Diſtance to be Maſters of their Language in any Degree equal to themſelves. Inſtead, therefore, of laying down fruitleſs Rules in an impracticable Point, I have rather thought fit to advance a Notion, that may ſeem particular, as a Reaſon for declining this Part of *Imitation*: And becauſe I would not be both ſingular and poſitive, I would beg Leave to conſider the *Difficulties* of *Modern* Writers in *Imitating Ancient Language*.

nguage. Theſe Difficulties ariſe rtly from the Diverſity of the ɔngues, and partly from the Re-ɔteneſs of Time. As to the firſt, : are ſenſible, that Diverſity of the nguage is no inſuperable Diffi-lty. Modern Writers of diffe-ıt Nations may ſucceed in each ıers Tongues. The *Engliſh* may ite *French*; the *French Engliſh*; : *Spaniard Italian*; and the *Ita-n Spaniſh*, and *either other* with ual Purity and Perfection; and : Reaſon is, theſe being *Living* nguages, a Man by Study and ɔnverſation, eſpecially if trained (as we are in *Greek* and *Latin*) m the Cradle, may come to an olute Maſtery. The greateſt Dif-ılty lies in the Diſtance of Time, ıere the Languages are *Dead*, the oks cloſed, the Standard fixed to ew Authors in ſeveral Kinds; be-e the *Obſcurity* that is brought over

over them by the Courſe of *Ignorance* and *Age*, made yet more *obſcure* by their *Pedantical Elucidators*. But, ſetting theſe aſide, I would conſider the Ancient as *Dead* Languages only, and take the Difficulty of *Imitation* in that ſingle reſpect.

Not to be tedious therefore in the Cloſe of this Article, let us propoſe *Horace* for one Inſtance, inſtead of others, who is every where, in his *Odes* eſpecially, ſo curious and choice in his Expreſſions, that in *imitating* him, it hath been always *ſacred* to *imitate* his Diction. We have indeed the Purity and Propriety of his Language, the Reſult of all his Judgment and Corrections; and this may ſeem an Advantage to us upon any Imitation of him: But I think it, for that very Reaſon, a manifeſt Diſadvantage, and a great Reſtraint upon us; for we are tied up to a Sett,

t, or Catalogue of Phraſes, and obliged to form all our different mbinations of Words, to expreſs thouſand Differences of Thought : of thoſe which he has ſelected expreſs his own Thoughts upon own Subjects. He had the whole mpaſs of the *Roman* Tongue to ıge in, all the Riches and Variety that Language before him, and ı thouſand Words were preſent to Mind ; out of which he choſe : beſt and fitteſt for his Purpoſe : ıd had he attempted another Book *Odes*, without tying himſelf up, d perhaps without repeating any e Expreſſion of his former, he ight have given us another of the ne Strain and Reſemblance with e reſt. For he could form infi- te Combinations of Words in the ne Way and Manner ; whereas e, who would *imitate* his Diction, e confined to his Authority, and his

his own Books contain all the Language we muſt uſe: For which Reaſon the Imitation is too near, and the Thoughts themſelves, from the very Neceſſity of the Expreſſion, too much the ſame. When all is done, where we propoſe to *imitate*, we are too apt to *tranſcribe*; and in ſome *Odes*, which I have ſeen happily accompliſh'd without regarding *Horace* farther than his Expreſſion, where the Subject hath been new, and the Thoughts entirely different, the Expreſſion being *Horatian*, and not originally deſigned to expreſs thoſe Thoughts it is applied to, hath ſeemed too much conſtrained, and to have wanted that Eaſineſs, that Freedom and Liberty, which are peculiar to *Horace*.

The Uſe I would make of this Remark, if it be of any Moment, is, that in order to *imitate* the *Ancients* with Succeſs, we ſhould obſerve

ſerve the *Romans* in their *Imitations* of the *Greeks* in this Point of Language which is now under Debate: And then, in Conformity to the *Roman* Conduct, we ſhall never attempt to write in *Greek* or *Latin* with any Hopes of coming up to the Celebrated Authors in thoſe Languages, but content ourſelves with writing in *Engliſh*, and rivalling them in their fineſt Pieces, by the Advantage of our Native Tongue joined to our Skill and Maſtery of theirs. For whatever Compoſitions *Horace*, *Virgil*, *Tully*, or any profeſſed Admirers and Imitators of the *Greeks* might have made in that Language, it is certain they never thought fit to leave any of thoſe Pieces behind them. How well ſoever they underſtood the *Greek* Tongue, they uſed their own in *Imitation*; tho' they improved upon their Authors, they would not rival them in their Language;

Language; they preferred Writing *well* in their *own* Tongue to Writing *not ſo well* in *another*, and were content to ſhew the *Grecian* Beauties in a *Roman* Dreſs. This Obſervation of their Practice is with me of ſo great Authority, that I think it the greateſt Preſumption to attempt the *Ancients* in their own Language, under the many Diſadvantages we muſt lie, and particularly theſe two; the Neceſſity of falling much below them at the beſt, and in coming too near them in the *Letter*, tho' we cannot reach them in the *Spirit* of their Expreſſion. I need not diſplay the Advantages of uſing our own Tongue rather than theirs: We may only look into the *Roman* Writers, and find, that the *Greek* was none of their Concern; they ſtudied it as *Scholars*, but would never uſe it as *Authors*; they enriched and enlarged the *Latin* with Supplies from the *Grecian*

Grecian Store; and by writing in their own Tongue, they could equal and excell; whereas, in the *Grecian*, they muſt have fallen ſhort of the Originals they propoſed to *Imitation*. And if we will take upon us to *imitate Horace* in his own Tongue, however ſome few Poets of the ſame Genius, and by a perfect Maſtery of his Language, may ſucceed in a few Attempts of this Nature, as we have ſome *Specimens* among ourſelves in the *Muſæ Anglicanæ*; the Generality of ſuch Enterprizes would certainly fail, and the greateſt Maſters themſelves, that have raiſed their Reputation by a few *Odes* admirably finiſhed, would certainly ruin it, ſhould they attempt to rival *Horace* in the Number, as well as in the Perfection of his Pieces. Were all the *Odes* of all the Modern Maſters in this Way collected, they might be comprized in a leſs Volume than

thoſe of the *Roman* Poet; and every Genius of every Nation muſt be called in for Aſſiſtance, if ever we intend the World ſhould ſee a Sett of *Odes* not inferiour to *Horace* in Number and Reputation.

I am under no Neceſſity of diſputing the Excellency of the *Latin* and *Engliſh* Tongues in Compariſon with one another. I will eaſily yield the Preference to the *Latin*; only give me Leave to ſay, that we muſt certainly write better in the *Living* Language than the *Dead*; and of our moſt celebrated Poets, particularly Mr. *Cowley*, the moſt celebrated in both, I may affirm, their *Engliſh* Works are much preferable to their *Latin*. I have inſtanced in Mr. *Cowley*, the rather, becauſe none wrote more maſterly in *Latin*, and no Poet was leſs curious in the Words and Cadence of his Verſe in *Engliſh*: His Words flowed rather from Nature.

ture than Art; and where they appear moſt to be ſtudied, they appear at the ſame time to be moſt affected, as when he endeavours to pleaſe too much. I ſpeak not this in the Way of Cenſure on this admirable Poet; I take his Careleſneſs of his Numbers to be an Argument of his Genius, which was too great to attend to the minuter Parts of a Compoſition, and he was ſure to pleaſe with all his Faults. But how negligent ſoever he ſeems in his *Engliſh* Pieces, he was as careful in his *Latin*; and tho' he wrote *Latin* Verſe in all Kinds the beſt of any Man of his Age, yet his *Engliſh* Writings, with all the Defects the Critics have ſurmized, are ſuperiour to his *Latin*. *Milton* I may alſo add; and beſides him, I do not readily call to mind another, that hath wrote much in *Latin* as well as *Engliſh*; and his *Paradiſe loſt*, as in all other reſpects,

ſo particularly in the Language, excelleth whatever his Pen hath left us of his *Latin* Pieces.

Indeed I am ſo far from having a mean Opinion of our Language, even when 'tis compared with the *Greek* and *Roman*, that tho' I may yield them the Preference upon Compariſon, I may nevertheleſs venture to ſay, that we can write better in our own Language than theirs, and that our Originals may be as difficult for them to tranſlate, or imitate, as theirs are to us, ſuppoſing, my Lord, ſome of the old Bards were alive again. Our Language, perhaps, is not ſo copious and comprehenſive as the *Greek*, nor ſo ſignificant and elegant as the *Latin*; and perhaps it is not capable of that Delicacy and Happineſs for which *Horace*, the Inſtance we had before us, is ſo celebrated; but let us try the utmoſt that our Language is able to perform; and then,

then, if we can reach *Horace* in his Thoughts, we ſhall not fall much below him in our Words.

In *Imitations* of the *Lyric* Poetry, there is one Caution to be obſerved, which I have partly intimated already, in cenſuring that Looſe and Libertine Way of *Paraphraſing* I have juſt taken Notice of; and that is, in writing *Odes*, nay, *Pindarics* themſelves, how lawleſs ſoever that Word may ſound, we ſhould ſet ſome Bounds to our Fancy, and ſome Laws to our Verſe. 'Tis not my Purpoſe, and it does not fall within my Subject, to lay down the Rules of *Odes* and *Pindarics*; they may be learn'd from the Examples of the *Ancients*, and ſome ſhort Notices of the *Moderns*. I would only give a Check to that monſtrous Cuſtom, which hath prevailed in this Kind of Compoſition, of writing perfectly at Random, and running

from one Thing to another in unequal Stanzas, and unequal Meaſures, as if the Licentiouſneſs of the Metre was brought to juſtify the Licentiouſneſs of the Imagination. This Way of Writing indulges *Tranſitions* more, perhaps, than any other: But the Beauty of *Odes* does by no means conſiſt in *Tranſitions*, and the Beauty of *Tranſitions* themſelves lieth in their being Natural, and maintaining a ſecret Correſpondence with all the other Parts from the Beginning to the End. Nay, I will venture to affirm, that where the *Tranſition* paſſeth entirely to another Subject, and the Author never returns to the firſt Occaſion of the *Ode*, it muſt riſe out of ſomething that went before, which gave the Hint, and introduced it into the Poet's Mind. But I am going out of my Province, and tranſgreſſing in the very Inſtance of *Tranſition*. Your Lordſhip will pardon

don me, if I only plead, that I would not have our *Modern* Poets, under a Pretence of *imitating* the *Ancients*, give themſelves ſuch Airs, and ſuch a Looſe in *Lyrics*, as if there were no Numbers, no Meaſure, no Connexion in the World.

After ſo much hath been ſaid of Imitation in the ſeveral Kinds and Degrees under which it may be conſidered, we may venture to look upon the Authors themſelves, and the Subject of their Works. Hiſtory, Poetry, and Divinity, have been the diſtinguiſhing Parts of our Writings; and I will be bold to give this general Character of our Writers in them, that they only fall ſhort of the Graces and Beauties of the Ancients.

Divinity, my Lord, is the juſt Boaſt and Glory of *England*. I need not ſay, that our Writers have excelled in Soundneſs of Doctrine, Ex-

actneſs of Method, and Clearneſs of Reaſoning, but they have excelled alſo in the Simplicity and Elegance of their Style, in Brightneſs of Thought, and Beauty of Expreſſion.

The Famous *Tillotſon* is all over Natural and Eaſy in the moſt unconſtrained and freeſt Elegancy of Thoughts and Words: His Courſe, both in his Reaſoning and his Style, like a gentle and an even Current, is clear and deep, and calm and ſtrong. His Language is ſo pure, no Water can be more; it floweth with ſo free, uninterrupted a Stream, that it never ſtoppeth the Reader or itſelf. Every Word poſſeſſeth its proper Place; we meet no hard, unuſual, mean, far-fetched, or over-ſtrained Expreſſion: His Diction is not in the naked Terms of the Things he ſpeaks of, but rather metaphorical; yet ſo eaſily are his Metaphors transferred,

that

that You would not ſay they intrude into another's Place, but that they ſtep into their own.

The Biſhop of *Rocheſter* is the correcteſt Writer of the Age, and comes neareſt to the great *Originals* of *Greece* and *Rome*, by a ſtudious Imitation of the Ancients: His Plainneſs and Accuracy, his Sublime and Oratory, are equally laboured: His *Life* of *Cowley*, and his excellent *Diſcourſe* to his *Clergy*, are admirable for the Modeſty and Plainneſs, and inimitable Simplicity of their Dreſs. His Anſwer to *Sorbiere* is ſo handſome a Way of expoſing an empty, trifling, pretending Pedant, the Wit ſo lively, the Satyr ſo courtly, and ſo ſevere, and his Addreſs in maintaining the Honour of our Country ſo maſterly and accompliſhed, that he maketh his Adverſary, a ridiculous Thing too Inconſiderable for our Anger, at once the Subject of

our Diverſion and Contempt. His Letters to my Lord *Dorſet* are the beſt Patterns of Apology, and a true Epiſtolary Style on a publick Subject: His Sermons are truly fine, ſo very beautiful, and ſo extremely ſtudied in every bright Thought, and delicate Expreſſion, and all the Charms of Language, that Religion looketh lovely like herſelf, as well as venerable in our Eyes.

I have been induced by the Pleaſure that remaineth on my Mind from Reading, to forget that I was mentioning him only as a Divine; but every Thing from his Pen is in ſuch Perfection, that 'tis of Advantage to Your Lordſhip, where-ever I introduce him.

I will only add what is more than can be ſaid of *Tully*, in the Biſhop we meet the Poet and the Orator, eminently conjoined.

Mr.

Mr. *Duke* may be alſo mentioned under the Double Capacity of a *Poet* and a *Divine*. He is a bright Example in the ſeveral Parts of Writing, whether we conſider his *Originals*, his *Tranſlations*, *Paraphraſes*, or *Imitations*: But here I can only mention him as a *Divine*, with this peculiar Commendation, that in his Sermons, beſides Livelineſs of Wit, Purity and Correctneſs of Style, and Juſtneſs of Argument, we ſee many fine Alluſions to the Ancients, ſeveral beautiful Paſſages handſomely incorporated in the Train of his own Thoughts: And to ſay all in a Word, *Claſſic Learning*, and a *Chriſtian Spirit*.

I may juſtly add the Archbiſhop of *York*, who is truly Excellent in all the Perfections of good Writing. Goodneſs, Fervour, Strength, and a true Spirit of Piety, run thro' his various Compoſitions, in plain, unaffected Majeſty of Style.

With the good Archbiſhop, I muſt join the late Learned and Venerable Biſhop of S. *Aſaph*, Dr. *Beveridge*, who hath delivered himſelf with thoſe Ornaments alone, which his Subject ſuggeſted to him, and hath written in that Plainneſs and Solemnity of Style, that Gravity and Simplicity, which give Authority to the Sacred Truths he teacheth, and unanſwerable Evidence to the Doctrines he defendeth. There is ſomething ſo Great, Primitive, and Apoſtolical in his Writings, that it creates an Awe and Veneration in our Mind: The Importance of his Subjects is above the Decoration of Words, and what is Great and Majeſtick in itſelf, looketh moſt like itſelf, the leſs it is adorned. The true Sublime in the great Articles of our Faith is lodged in the plaineſt Words. The Divine Revelations are beſt expreſſed in the Language they were revealed in, and

as

as I obſerved before of the Scriptures, they will ſuffer no Ornament or Amendment.

But then, Your Lordſhip will obſerve, that the Practice of Vertue and all Moral Duties admit of all the Powers of humane Wit and Eloquence; where we are to perſuade, as well as teach; where we are to engage the Will, as well as inform the Underſtanding; 'tis our Buſineſs to try all the Beauties and Charms of Words, and with all the Force of Oratory to prevail with Men to practiſe what they own to be their Duty. For Conviction of the Truth, we find by Experience, is not enough, unleſs the Will and Affections be won over to its Side.

I have troubled Your Lordſhip with theſe great Men, not that I think You will ever write Sermons, but that You may judge of the Writers; and as far as their Style may

be

be proper on other Subjects, they are able to give You a true Taſte, and a Right Turn of ſolid, and fine Writing.

Your Lordſhip, however, may on many Occaſions write as a Chriſtian, tho' not as a Divine; and whether Your Pen ſhall delight in Poetry or Proſe, the Subjects You may chooſe, and the Thoughts which are natural to every Sacred Theme, are ſo far exalted above the Heathen Poetry or Philoſophy, that the meaneſt Chriſtian, however he may fail in Diction, is able to ſurpaſs the nobleſt Wits of Antiquity in the Truth, and Greatneſs of his Sentiments.

Let me only propoſe a *Chriſtian Orator*, and compare him with the Orators of *Greece* and *Rome*, to ſhew Your Lordſhip the Advantages we are poſſeſſed of, and how greatly we may excell. If Your Lordſhip reads

reads the Topics of *Ariſtotle* and *Tully*, and will obſerve how all their Arguments are formed upon the Circumſtances of Things, and drawn and enforced from the Vertues and Vices, the Paſſions and Inclinations of Mankind, You will ſee the whole Compaſs their Thoughts could be extended to, and obſerve, that they have neglected no Advantage to raiſe, and beautify, and enforce their Arguments. But what a poor, barren Field is this, compared with the glorious Harveſt every Chriſtian gathers in the Scriptures? The Treaſures of Revelation are Immenſe: Every Article of Faith: All that GOD hath done for us, and declared unto us, are ſo many Arguments of Perſuaſion; they are the only Principles of a Chriſtian's Practice, and the Reaſon of his Duty: All the Paſſions and Affections of our Souls are moved by the moſt powerful

ful Application. A Chriſtian's Topics are the Attributes of GOD, the Manifeſtations of His infinite Love to Mankind: Our Creation, our Fall, our Redemption in the wonderful Method the Scriptures declare it in: The Rewards propoſed, the Puniſhments denounced: Heaven and Hell, Happineſs and Miſery eternal: The Reſurrection of our Bodies: The Righteouſneſs and Awfulneſs of the laſt Judgment: The Majeſty of the Judge: The Solemnity of the Proceedings: The Comfort and the Terrors of His final Sentence: Fear and Love, Deſire of Happineſs, Dread of Miſery, Gratitude to move more generous Minds, Intereſt to prevail with lower Spirits, all enforced from eternal, infinite Conſiderations, are the inexhauſtible Stores of a Chriſtian Orator. And now, my Lord, with me the Wonder is, that our Divines do not

not exceed the greateſt Orators of *Greece* and *Rome*, as far as our Topics of Argument and Perſuaſion are nobler, and infinitely more forcible than theirs: To argue for Vertue by diſplaying her Beauties, and ſhowing the Reaſonableneſs and Convenience of the Practice, with no other Encouragement, than the ſecret Satisfaction of having done worthily and well, (ſo for want of other, making Vertue her own Reward) was all the Heathens could advance with any Certainty in the Cauſe; whereas, the Chriſtian is ſupplied with all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, which GOD hath abundantly poured forth upon the World.

The only Account, my Lord, that I can give, why *Tully*, for Example, could talk ſo well in the Cauſe of Vertue under all the Diſadvantage of Argument, and why we

under

under a clearer Light, and furniſhed with a richer Vein of Eloquence, do yet in Arguments of a Moral Nature fall below him, is this, That ſince we do not write by Inſpiration, we may fail in the Faculty and Power of writing ſo much, that the Advantages of our Subject cannot ſet us upon the Level: 'Tis for this Reaſon I recommend Claſſic Learning, and a juſt Style in Divinity. We ſee the Effects in thoſe that are Maſters of them: And ſhould an Orator ever riſe of *Demoſthenes*'s Spirit, and *Tully*'s Genius, and apply himſelf as an Orator to Divinity, work and labour his Subject by all the great Topics of Reaſoning and Perſuaſion, what wonderful Productions ſhould we behold? And if the pathetic, perſuaſive Way of Writing, were more practiſed and enforced, I believe it would produce wonderful Effects among thoſe who are not

not wanting in the Knowledge of their Duty, nor yet in the Conviction of its Truth, but are backward in their Practice of it, and forward to tranſgreſs it. I cannot leave this Argument, without one Obſervation more, That if we will write of Morality only upon the Heathen Plan, and enforce it only from their Topics, we ſhall find all our Eſſays too weak, and demonſtrate to the World, that a meer Moral Chriſtian is as much below a Pagan, as a Divine or Believing Chriſtian is above him.

I am under an Engagement to Your Lordſhip to ſay ſomething of Hiſtory towards forming Your Style: I intended indeed to have ſpoken of it at large; but ſince it is enough for me at preſent to mention only our moſt celebrated Hiſtorians, I will deferr what I deſigned to ſay of the Laws of Hiſtory, and the Rules

Rules to be obſerved in Reading i
till Your Lordſhip ſhall give me Per
miſſion to trouble You farther i
this way.

All that ſeemeth neceſſary to th
Buſineſs now before us, is to giv
Your Lordſhip ſome Obſervation
upon the Hiſtorical Style, becauſ
of all others, I take it to be the mo
difficult to attain in Perfection: I
all other Subjects there is a great
Latitude and Compaſs for the Wr
ter's Thoughts, a larger Field
Fancy and Imagination before hin
but in Hiſtory he is confined to th
Facts and Occurrences he relatet
And theſe, as they are not alil
Entertaining, and Ornamental
themſelves, require great Force a
Judgment in the Narration to mal
them all agreeable. The worſt Pr
vince an Hiſtorian can fall upon,
a Series of barren Times, in whi
nothing remarkable happeneth,

awa

awake our Attention, or engage our Notice. Here the Writer is becalmed, and goes on a dull, ſmooth, ſleepy Pace, unleſs he hath Spirit of his own to breathe into his Subject, and make it move with Life, as well as Truth, which muſt never be forſaken: The richeſt Fields of Hiſtory are Scenes of Action and Commotion, where Nations are agitated by Wars abroad, or Factions at Home: The moſt delicate Part of an Hiſtorian, which requireth the deepeſt Penetration, and ſoundeſt Judgment, are the Councils of States and Princes; the Springs of Action, the Principal Wheels, and Cardinal Hinges: The Characters of Men, the Juncture of Times, the Intereſt of Parties, their different Views, and the ſeveral Schemes they purſue; I do not intend to ſay what Talents are required in an Hiſtorian, it will run me off too much from

from the Style I am to ſpeak of, if I ſhould enlarge upon them.

Every body knoweth the general Deſign of Hiſtory; and among thoſe who are in all Points qualified to undertake it, they will excell who have the brighteſt Genius, and the moſt lively Wit. Perhaps, Your Lordſhip will wonder, I am ſure many People will condemn me for this Aſſertion, but I cannot help it, my Lord, for I have always thought that the more we are bound up to an exact Narration, we want more Life, and Fire to animate and inform the Story, otherwiſe the Succeſs of an Hiſtorian would depend on the Times he writeth of, more than on his Abilities. This moſt auſpicious Reign of our moſt Gracious QUEEN, hath opened the brighteſt and moſt glorious Scene that Hiſtory can diſplay. The Triumphs of Her Arms, and the Happineſs

ıeſs of Her Councils, illuſtrate and
orn each other in a perfect Harmo-
and Co-operation. Theſe Annals
ill ſhine in any Hand, the Subject is
Great and Glorious, it carrieth
ith it its own Light and Ornament;
ıt nevertheleſs, that Genius, which
n beautify and enliven the ſtiller
imes of Peace, will celebrate the
riumphs of uninterrupted Con-
ıeſt in a Style moſt equal to the
ırtune, and Glory of our Arms.
Hiſtory, my Lord, will not admit
oſe Decorations other Subjects are
pable of; the Paſſions and Affe-
ions are not to be moved with any
hing, but the Truth of the Narra-
ɔn. All the Force and Beauty muſt
: in the Order and Expreſſion.
'o relate every Event with Clear-
:ſs and Perſpicuity, in ſuch Words
: beſt expreſs the Nature of the
ıbject, is the chief Commendation
: an Hiſtorian's Style. Hiſtory
giveth

giveth us a Draught of Facts and Tranſactions in the World. The Colours theſe are painted in, the Strength and Significancy of the ſeveral Faces: The regular Confuſion of a Battle: The Diſtractions of a Tumult ſenſibly depicted: Every Object, and every Occurrence ſo preſented to Your View, that while You read, You ſeem indeed to ſee them; this is the Art and Perfection of an Hiſtorical Style. And Your Lordſhip will obſerve that thoſe who have excelled in Hiſtory, have excelled in this eſpecially, and what hath made them the Standards of that Style, is the Clearneſs, the Life and Vigor of their Expreſſion, every where properly varied, according to the Variety of the Subjects they wrote on: For Hiſtory and Narration are nothing but juſt and lively Deſcriptions of remarkable Events and Accidents.

For

For this Reaſon we praiſe *Herodotus* and *Thucydides* among the *Greeks*, for I will mention no more of them; and upon this Account we commend *Salluſt* and *Livy* among the *Romans*. For tho' they all differ in their Style, yet they all agree in theſe common Excellencies. *Herodotus* diſplays a natural Oratory in the Beauty and Clearneſs of a numerous and ſolemn Diction; he floweth with a ſedate and majeſtic Pace, with an eaſy Current, and a pleaſant Stream. *Thucydides* doth ſometimes write in a Style ſo cloſe, that almoſt every Word is a Sentence, and every Sentence almoſt acquaints us with ſomething New, ſo that from the Multitude of Cauſes, and Variety of Matter crowded together, we ſhould ſuſpect him to be obſcure; but yet ſo happy, ſo admirable a Maſter is he in the Art of Expreſſion, ſo proper, and ſo full, that we cannot ſay whether his Diction doth

more illuſtrate the Things he ſpeaks of, or whether his Words themſelves are not illuſtrated by his Matter. So mutual a Light do his Expreſſion and Subject reflect on each other. His Diction, tho' it be preſſed and cloſe, is nevertheleſs great and magnificent, equal to the Dignity and Importance of his Subject. He firſt, after *Herodotus*, ventured to adorn the Hiſtorian's Style, to make the Narration more pleaſing, by leaving the Flatneſs and Nakedneſs of former Ages. This is moſt obſervable in his Battles, where he does not only relate the meer Fight, but writeth with a Martial Spirit, as if he ſtood in the hotteſt of the Engagement; and what is moſt excellent, as well as remarkable in ſo cloſe a Style, is, that it is numerous and harmonious, that his Words are not laboured nor forced, but fall into their Places in a natural Order,

Order, as into their moſt proper Situation.

Salluſt and *Livy* Your Lordſhip will read, I hope, with ſo much Pleaſure, as to make a thorough and intimate Acquaintance with them. I have ſaid a great many Pages back, that *Thucydides* and *Salluſt* are generally compared, as *Livy* is with *Herodotus*; and ſince I am fallen upon their Characters, I cannot help touching the Compariſons. *Salluſt* is repreſented as a conciſe, a ſtrong and nervous Writer; and ſo far he agreeth with *Thucydides*'s Manner: But he is alſo charged with being obſcure, as conciſe Writers very often are, without any Reaſon. For, if I may judge by my own Apprehenſions, as I read him, no Writer can be more clear, more obvious and intelligible. He hath not indeed, as far as I can obſerve, one redundant Expreſſion; but his Words are all weighed and choſen, ſo ex-

preſſive and ſignificant, that I will challenge any Critic to take a Sentence of his, and expreſs it clearer or better; his Contraction ſeemeth wrought and laboured. To me he appears as a Man, that conſidered and ſtudied Perſpicuity and Brevity to that degree, that he would not retrench a Word which might help him to expreſs his Meaning, nor ſuffer one to ſtand, if his Senſe was clear without it. Being more diffuſed, would have weakened his Language, and have made it obſcurer rather, than clearer: For Multitude of Words only ſerves to cloud, or diſſipate the Senſe; and tho' a copius Style in a Maſter's Hand is clear and beautiful, yet where Conciſeneſs and Perſpicuity are once reconciled, any Attempt to enlarge the Expreſſions, if it doth not darken, does certainly make the Light much feebler. *Salluſt* is all Life and Spirit, yet grave and majeſtic in his Diction: His Uſe of

old

old Words is perfectly Right; there is no Affectation, but more Weight and Significancy in them; the Boldneſs of his Metaphors are among his greateſt Beauties, they are choſen with great Judgment, and ſhow the Force of his Genius: The Colouring is ſtrong, and the Strokes are bold; and in my Opinion he choſe them for the Sake of that Brevity he loved, to expreſs more clearly and more forcibly, what otherwiſe he muſt have written in looſer Characters with leſs Strength and Beauty. And no Fault can be objected to the juſteſt and exacteſt of the *Roman* Writers.

Livy, my Lord, is the moſt Conſiderable of the *Roman* Hiſtorians, if to the Perfection of his Style we join the Compaſs of his Subject. In which he hath the Advantage over all that wrote before him in any Nation, but the *Jewiſh*, eſpe-

cially over *Thucydides*, whoſe Hiſtory, however drawn out into Length, is confined to the ſhorteſt Period of any, except what remaineth of *Salluſt*. No Hiſtorian could be happier in the Greatneſs and Dignity of his Subject, and none was better qualified to adorn it; for his Genius was equal to the Majeſty of the *Roman* Empire, and every way capable of the mighty Undertaking; he is not ſo copious in Words, as abundant in Matter, rich in his Expreſſion, grave, majeſtic, and lively, and if I may have Liberty to enlarge on the old Commendation, I would ſay his Style floweth with Milk and Honey, in ſuch Abundance, ſuch Pleaſure and Sweetneſs, that when once Your Lordſhip is Proficient enough to read him readily, You will go on with unwearied Delight, and never lay him out of Your Hands without Impatience to reſume him. We

may

may reſemble him to *Herodotus*, in the Manner of his Diction; but he is more like *Thucydides* in the Grandeur and Majeſty of Expreſſion; and if we obſerve the Multitude of Clauſes in the length of his Periods, perhaps *Thucydides* himſelf is not more crowded; only the Length of the Periods is apt to deceive us; and great Men among the Ancients, as well as Moderns, have been induced to think this Writer was copious, becauſe his Sentences were long. Copious he is indeed, and forcible in his Deſcriptions, not laviſh in the Number, but exuberant in the Richneſs and Significancy of his Words. Your Lordſhip will obſerve, for I ſpeak upon my own Obſervation, that *Livy* is not ſo eaſy and obvious to be underſtood as *Salluſt*; the Experiment is made every where in reading five or ſix Pages of each Author together.

The Shortneſs of *Salluſt*'s Sentences, as long as they are clear, ſhows his Senſe and Meaning all the Way in an Inſtant: The Progreſs is quick and plain, and every three Lines gives us a new and complete Idea; we are carried from one Thing to another with ſo ſwift a Pace, that we run as we read, and yet cannot, if we read diſtinctly, run faſter than we underſtand him. This is the brighteſt Teſtimony that can be given of a clear and obvious Style. In *Livy*, my Lord, we cannot paſs on ſo readily; we are forced to wait for his Meaning till we come to the End of the Sentence, and have ſo many Clauſes to ſort, and refer to their proper Places in the Way, that I muſt own I cannot read him ſo readily at Sight as I can *Salluſt*; though with Attention and Conſideration I underſtand him as well. He is not ſo eaſy, nor ſo well adapted

to

to young Proficients, as the other; and is ever plaineſt, when his Sentences are ſhorteſt; which I think is a Demonſtration. Some, perhaps, will be apt to conclude, that in this I differ from *Quintilian*, but I do not conceive ſo myſelf. For *Quintilian* recommends *Livy* before *Salluſt*, rather for his Candor, and the larger Compaſs of his Hiſtory; for he owneth a good Proficiency is required to underſtand him; and I can only referr to the Experience of young Proficients, which of them is more open to their Apprehenſion. Diſtinction of Sentences, in few Words, provided the Words be plain and expreſſive, ever giveth Light to the Author, and carries his Meaning uppermoſt; but long Periods, and a Multiplicity of Clauſes, however they abound with the moſt obvious and ſignificant Words, do neceſſarily make the Meaning more

retired, leſs forward and obvious to the View: And in this, my Lord, *Livy* may ſeem as crowded as *Thucydides*, if not in the Number of Periods, certainly in the Multitude of Clauſes, which ſo diſpoſed, do rather obſcure, than illuminate his Writings. But in ſo rich, ſo majeſtic, ſo flowing a Writer, we may wait with Patience to the End of the Sentence, for the Pleaſure ſtill increaſeth as we read. The Elegance and Purity, the Greatneſs and Nobleneſs of his Diction, his Happineſs in Narration, and his wonderful Eloquence, are above all Commendation; and his Style, if we were to decide, is certainly the Standard of *Roman* Hiſtory. For *Salluſt*, I muſt own, is too impetuous in his Courſe; he hurries his Reader on too faſt, and hardly ever alloweth him the Pleaſure of Expectation, which in reading Hiſtory, where it is juſtly raiſed upon

on important Events, is the greateſt of all others.

Your Lordſhip will obſerve, by reading ſome ordinary Hiſtorians, and comparing them with theſe, that Hiſtory is the moſt difficult Province of all others; and if there were not ſomething in Novelty grateful to the Curioſity of Mankind, ſomething in the Hiſtories of our own Times and Nation, that engages us as Parties, and gives us an Intereſt in the Events, Nothing would be read, but what was ſo beautifully expreſſed, as by the Charms of Language, and Force of a lively Repreſentation, to attract our Eyes. Every great Hiſtorian would make a greater Orator; and perhaps the greateſt Orator, even *Tully* himſelf, would fall below the Hiſtorian, would he attempt to rival him: For the Orator hath the Advantage of all Arts and Topics

of Perſuaſion, but the Hiſtorian can only uſe the Abilities of an Orator to expreſs and relate, and according to Truth adorn the Subject of his Hiſtory.

Having thus prepared Your Lordſhip for reading them, ſo as to form ſome Judgment of their Style, from theſe ancient Standards I deſcend at laſt to our own Hiſtorians, who are no leſs various, than excellent in their Style and Method, and do not come altogether ſhort of the *Greek* and *Roman* Writers, but emulate both the Height and Spirit of the *Claſſic* Diction: The great Diſadvantage our moſt celebrated Hiſtorians ſeem to labour under, is too long, and too tedious an Interruption, by the Inſertion of Laws and Statutes, and Records in the Body of their Narration; at leaſt, in making too particular and copious a Recital of them, whereas they had better

be

be mentioned only in general, and thrown aſide by themſelves, as they commonly are, into an *Appendix.*

I will paſs over the Hiſtorians of elder Date, as *Daniel*, Lord *Verulam*, Lord *Herbert*, and others, as too remote from the preſent Standard; my Lord *Herbert* comes the neareſt; but what is a Wonder to me, Sir *Francis Bacon*, who hath given us many Strokes of a maſterly Pen, and was certainly the greateſt and moſt univerſal Genius the World, perhaps, hath produced, hath failed moſt in his Style, where we ſhould expect he would have moſt excelled. For in Philoſophy, Perſpicuity and a plain Elegance are only required; but in Hiſtory all the Beauty, Strength, Majeſty, and Compaſs of Expreſſion, are demanded. In theſe his *Henry* VII. is extremely wanting, and if we examine into it, we ſhall find, that nothing but the Reputation of the Author

thor ſupporteth the Reputation of the Hiſtory.

Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s Hiſtory of the World is a Work of ſo vaſt a Compaſs, ſuch endleſs Variety, that no Genius, but one Adventurous as his own, durſt have undertaken that great Deſign. I do not apprehend any great Difficulty in Collecting, and Common-placing an univerſal Hiſtory from the whole Body of Hiſtorians; that is nothing but mechanic Labour. But to digeſt the ſeveral Authors in his Mind, to take in all their Majeſty, Strength, and Beauty, to raiſe the Spirit of meaner Hiſtorians, and to equal all the Excellencies of the beſt, is Sir *Walter*'s peculiar Praiſe. His Style is the moſt perfect, the happieſt, and moſt beautiful of the Age he wrote in; majeſtic, clear, and manly; and he appears every where ſo ſuperiour, rather than unequal to his Subject,

that

that the Spirit of *Rome* and *Athens* ſeems to be breathed into his Work. In the Sacred Hiſtory alone, his Strength and his Spirit fail him: For nothing can preſerve that ſublime Simplicity, that awful Solemnity, and divine Majeſty of the inſpired Hiſtorians, but their own Words, as they are moſt plainly and properly rendred into any Language; this is an accidental Confirmation of a former Remark, and I muſt finiſh Sir *Walter*'s Character with declaring my Opinion, that his admirable Performance in ſuch a prodigious Undertaking ſheweth, that if he had attempted the Hiſtory of his own Country, or his own Times, he would have excelled even *Livy* and *Thucydides*; and the Annals of Queen *Elizabeth* by his Pen, without diminiſhing from the ſerious judicious *Cambden*, had been the brighteſt Glory of her Reign, and would have

have tranſmitted his Hiſtory as the Standard of our Language even to the preſent Age: For certainly the Writers in that glorious Reign, and the Beginning of the next, are far preferable in their Style to any, till you come to King *Charles* the Second. In the long Interval of half an Age, You will hardly meet with one beſides the *Royal Martyr*, whoſe Style is comparable to Sir *Philip Sidney*, *Biſhop Hooker*, or *Raleigh*. So that we muſt deſcend almoſt from the Reformation, at leaſt to the Reſtoration, for a Standard.

The Biſhop of *Salisbury* writeth with perfect Maſtery in a Language not Native to him; and whatever his Principles may be, his Style I may venture to ſay is entirely *Engliſh*; except, as was objected to *Livy*, it may ſeem ſometimes to *bewray* his Country.

The

The Hiſtory of the Royal Society ſhows how well Philoſophy becometh a Narration, and that the Progreſs of Knowledge is as entertaining at that of Arms; her Conqueſts more extended, and her Victories more glorious. The Diction is every where ſuited to the Subject: The whole Work ſpeaketh the Author in a ſtudied Eaſineſs, and correct Accuracy of Expreſſion, and a Style as much improved, as the Philoſophy he treateth of.

I dare not attempt my Lord *Clarendon*'s Commendation: To give his juſt Character, requireth a Happineſs of Expreſſion, a Clearneſs of Judgment, and Majeſty of Style equal to his Own: Or to ſay all in a Word, that peculiar Felicity in deſigning Characters, in which he hath ſucceeded beyond Example. Your Lordſhip will want no Solicitations to read the nobleſt and moſt impar-

tial

tial Hiſtorian this Nation hath produced. The Compaſſion and Reſentment of his Thoughts, the noble Openneſs and Freedom of his Reflexions, the glorious Debt he pays to Friendſhip, and the Veil he kindly draweth over the Sorrows and Reproach of his Country, are ſo admirably expreſſed in ſuch lively Colours, that we are ſtruck with Sympathy, and do feel by Reading, that he wrote from his Heart under the deepeſt Senſe, and the moſt preſent Impreſſion of the Evils he bewaileth. I have met with none that may compare with him in the Weight and Solemnity of his Style, in the Strength and Clearneſs of his Diction, in the Beauty and Majeſty of Expreſſion, and that noble Negligence of Phraſe, which maketh his Words wait every where upon his Subject, with a Readineſs and Propriety,

priety, that Art and Study are almoſt Strangers to.

Reading theſe celebrated Authors will give Your Lordſhip a true Taſte of good Writing, and form You to a juſt and correct Style upon every Occaſion that ſhall demand Your Pen. I would not recommend any of them to a ſtrict Imitation: That is ſervile and mean, and You cannot propoſe an exact Copy of a Pattern, without falling ſhort of the Original; but if Your Lordſhip once readeth them with a true Reliſh and Diſcernment of their Beauties, You may lay them aſide, and be ſecure of writing with all the Graces of them all, without owing Your Perfection to any. Your Style and Manner will be Your own, and even Your Letters upon the moſt ordinary Subjects will have a native Beauty and Elegance in the Compoſition, which will equal them with the beſt

Originals,

Originals, and ſet them far above the common Standard.

Upon this Occaſion, my Lord, I cannot paſs by Your Favourite Author, the grave and facetious 'Squire *Bickerſtaff*, who hath drawn Mankind in every Dreſs, and every Diſguiſe of Nature, in a Style ever varying with the Humours, Fancies, and Follies he deſcribes. He hath ſhowed himſelf a Maſter in every Turn of his Pen, whether his Subject be light or ſerious, and hath laid down the Rules of Common Life with ſo much Judgment, in ſuch agreeable, ſuch lively and elegant Language, that from him Your Lordſhip at once may form Your Manners and Your Style.

Perhaps I ſhall be blamed, if I recommend any Modern Comedies to Your Reading. They are, indeed, moſt of them ſo very prophane and obſcene, that I had much rather cau-

tion

tion Your Lordſhip moſt earneſtly againſt them, than give them the leaſt Countenance in judging they may be read with Safety. But if the moſt Innocent were choſen, and the moſt Innocent are the beſt, I muſt needs ſay ſo much in their Behalf, that I know no Writers who are better able to give You a true Notion of familiar Wit and Writing, than the beſt and moſt correct of our Comic Authors.

And now, my Lord, You ſee I am entered upon Poetry, where little need be ſaid after what I have ſaid already. Perhaps I may touch ſome Characters again; but beſides thoſe I have named, I may recommend Mr. *Addiſon*, and Mr. *Prior*, as perfect Patterns of true Poetic Writing. Mr. *Addiſon* is more laboured, like his great Maſter *Virgil*, he hath weighed every Word; nor is there an Expreſſion in all his Lines,

that

maketh the Blood run cold or warm, and is ſo admirable a Maſter of the Paſſions, that he raiſes Your Courage, Your Pity, and Your Fear, at his Pleaſure, but he delighteth moſt in Terror.

Milton, my Lord, is the Aſſertor of Poetic Liberty, and would have freed us from the Bondage of Rhime, but like Sinners, and like Lovers, we hug our Chain, and are pleaſed in being Slaves. Some indeed have made ſome faint Attempts to break it, but their Verſe had all the Softneſs and Effeminacy of Rhime without the Muſic: And *Dryden* himſelf, who ſometimes ſtruggled to get looſe, always relapſed, and was faſter bound than ever; but Rhime was his Province, and he could make the Tinkling of his Chains harmonious. Mr. *Philips* hath trod the neareſt in his great Maſter's Steps, and hath equalled him in his Verſe more

more than he falleth below him in the Compaſs and Dignity of his Subject. The *Shilling* is truly *Splendid* in his Lines, and his Poems will live longer than the unfiniſhed Caſtle, as long as *Blenheim* is remembred, or *Cyder* drunk in *England*. But I have digreſſed from *Milton*, and that I may return, and ſay all in a Word: His Style, his Thoughts, his Verſe are as ſuperiour to the Generality of other Poets, as his Subject. His Diſloyalty alone throws a Cloud upon his Glory, and we ſtand amazed to think that Man could ever be a Rebel, who had ſeen, as it were, and deſcribed, in all the Pomp of Terror, the Rebellion and Puniſhment of the Apoſtate Angels.

Cowley I need not inſiſt on, when his Character is ſo admirably drawn by ſo great a Maſter, as I have named already.

Waller, for the Muſic of his Numbers, the Courtlineſs of his Verſe, the Eaſineſs and Happineſs of his Thoughts on a thouſand Subjects, deſerves Your Lordſhip's Conſideration more, perhaps, than any other, becauſe his Manner and his Subjects are more common to Perſons of Quality, and the Affairs of a Court. Mr. *Granville*, my Lord, hath rivall'd him in his fineſt Addreſs, and is as happy, as he ever was, in raiſing modern Compliments upon ancient Story, and ſetting off the *Britiſh* Valour and the *Engliſh* Beauty, with the old Gods and Goddeſſes.

Sir *John Denham* is famed for his *Coopers-Hill*, and *Windſor* is more honoured in being the Subject of his Proſpect, than the *Hill* is in being the Subject of his Poem. For *Windſor* is only the Ornament of his *Hill*, but his Poem is the Ornament of *Windſor*.

I cannot help inſerting into the Body of this Book that Character which I think Sir *John Denham* ſo highly deſerveth, for his excellent Verſion of the Pſalms: They are ſo admirable in our old Proſe Tranſlation, that I deſpair of ever ſeeing them equalled in Verſe; but Sir *John*, by a noble Simplicity of Style, by a Clearneſs and Eaſineſs of Expreſſion, by an Exactneſs and Harmony of Numbers, hath made them ſo delightful to the Ear, and ſo pleaſing to the Reader, that as a meer Poetical Work, it muſt be read with all the Satisfaction which Pieces perfect in their Kind can give us: But this is vaſtly raiſed, when we conſider the Subject Matter various as the ſeveral Occaſions, and devout Paſſions of the Pſalmiſts, and obſerve the Tranſlator varying his Style, and every where forming himſelf to the Spirit of the Original,

ſometimes in humble Acknowledgments of a repenting Sinner, ſometimes in the chearful Voice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving: In ſome Pſalms delivering Divine Precepts with all the Plainneſs, Simplicity, and Majeſty of Verſe; in others, celebrating the Goodneſs and Providence of God throughout the World: In ſome recounting the great Things God hath done for his People in an Hiſtorical, but a Great and Solemn Narration of the Wonders, the Mercies and Deliverances vouchſafed unto them: In others diſplaying the Works of Creation, the Might and Majeſty of the Creator, His Wiſdom, Juſtice, and Goodneſs in the ſublimeſt Strains, above the Reach of all mortal Eloquence. The Dignity of the Original is duly regarded in all the Parts of this Tranſlation, and the Divine Spirit is beſt preſerved, in being the leaſt mixed

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with any humane Conceits. In his other Pieces this Honourable Bard roſe above moſt others, in an Age that moſt abounded with good Poets; but much more in this Tranſlation, by which he hath not only raiſed his Fame, but himſelf, to Heaven.

Several other of our Poets deſerve to be remembred, and they ſhould not be omitted, if I thought theſe Sheets a Record. I have already mentioned Mr. *Dryden* on the wrong Side of a Compariſon, and it would be Injuſtice to paſs him by, when I may mention him on the Right. For, certainly, there never roſe a happier Genius, and a more abſolute Maſter of Language, and Numbers. All his Poems were extremely ſtudied, and he made every Thing he borrowed ſo much his own, that he improved the brighteſt Paſſages of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and repaid them with abundant Intereſt.

Otway writes with ſo fine a Spirit, with ſo perfect a Command of our Paſſions, his Language is ſo very beautiful, and all his tender Strains ſo very moving in the moſt ſenſible Words, that, perhaps, Your Lordſhip will no where meet the Paſſions touched with a more maſterly Hand, or expreſſed in more lively Colours.

I have made no diſtinct Mention of Tragedy, and the moſt celebrated of our Writers that have raiſed the *Engliſh* Stage, as high as the *Athenian*; they have moſt excelled, when they formed their Plays on the *Grecian* Plan, or built them, at leaſt, after the ancient Models. And where the Unities are preſerved by a great Genius, and a maſterly Hand, I think the Structure of our Tragedies more beautiful than the ancient Buildings. Your Lordſhip, I hope, will never act a Part, where that Language is required;

quired; and I have omitted to ſpeak of the Tragic Style, becauſe 'tis raiſed above the ordinary Sentiments and Expreſſion of Mankind. The Perſons of the Drama ſpeak as they are dreſſed, in Buskins. The Mind is in too much Commotion, and agitated by thoſe Paſſions, that can be only raiſed upon ſuch a Criſis, as worketh up all the Actions of Life to the laſt and moſt important Event. Yet, my Lord, our Tragedies may be read with great Advantage to Style and Language, if we can bring them down to our calmer Thoughts, and the ſtiller Scenes of Life, and only uſe them to be better acquainted with the Nature, Violence, Degrees, and Expreſſion of all the various Paſſions that exerciſe and diſtract the Mind of Man. Treatiſes are of no uſe to inform us upon this great Subject, but when the Paſſions are practically diſplayed,

ed, all their Springs diſcovered, and the whole tumultuous Theory preſented in lively Actions on the Stage, we ſee and feel the Agitation of the Actors in ourſelves, we do really put on all their perſonated Paſſions, they ſtrike upon our Souls, and Nature anſwers from within. We have but few great Maſters in this noble Art. After *Shakeſpear*, whom I have named already, and *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*, who have ſometimes touched the Paſſions with a maſterly Hand, we muſt come down to *Dryden* and *Otway*, who ſtand almoſt alone, unleſs *Lee* may be joined unto them, but he is too much out of the Way, too much in a Paſſion to be named, and therefore we will put *Southern* into his Room. Afterwards we have none of Conſideration, but *Congreve*, *Rowe*, and Mr. *Granville*, and two *Oxford* Scholars, who need not be pointed out.

I do not inſiſt on the particular Character of theſe Authors, thinking it enough to my Purpoſe to name them, as the moſt diſtinguiſhed of our Tragic Writers.

Suckling, and other *Bards* celebrated in their Time, I forbear; and *Ben Johnſon* I dare not meddle with, leſt he, or ſome body ſurly as himſelf, ſhould riſe and rebuke me for not writing of him with that Labour and Exactneſs he always wrote with.

My Lord, I have given You a Liſt of Poets almoſt equal to the *Ancients*, and this is the greateſt Character that can be given of *Modern* Works. For though I think *Spencer* and *Shakeſpear* as great Genius's as ever were produced in *Rome* or *Athens*, they will not bear a ſtrict Compariſon upon all the Beauties of Writing. *Milton*, alone, in *Epic* Writing hath tranſcended the *Greek*

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and the *Latin* Poet. He hath excelled the *First* in the Force and Richneſs of Imagination, and hath rivalled the *Laſt* in Juſtneſs of Thought, and Exactneſs of the Work. *Spencer* may, perhaps, diſpute the *Paſtoral*, even with *Theocritus*; for I dare preferr him to *Virgil*, and in him alone the Sweetneſs and Ruſticity of the *Doric* Muſe was to be found, till of late Years ſome happy Genius's among ourſelves have aſſembled all the Beauties of the *Arcadian* Poetry, and reſtored their Simplicity, Language and Manners to the Swains. Here then, my Lord, we ſtand. I may with great Modeſty and Juſtice own, that ſeveral Pieces of *Engliſh* Compoſure are nothing inferiour to the Choiceſt Productions of Antiquity; but I cannot pronounce ſo, upon the Whole, upon their Writers and ours. I muſt beg Pardon therefore, if I fall into

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Sir *William Temple*'s Party in this Article of *Ancient* and *Modern* Learning, and give the Preference to the great Originals of *Greece* and *Rome*; I am the more confirmed in this Judgment, by obſerving that our greateſt Maſters in Compoſition have been always of the ſame Opinion; and it would be hard for the Patrons of *Modern* Learning, when they can ſhow nothing of their *Own*, that may compare with the *Ancients*, to argue for their Opinion from the Writings of thoſe who diſclaim it.

But, my Lord, I muſt not enter into this Controverſy now, and having given You theſe few Directions for the forming Your Style by reading the celebrated Writers of *Italy* and *England*, I ſhall take my Leave of this Subject, after I have juſt mentioned this one Particular, That perhaps the beſt Way to diſ-

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cern the Beauties of good Writing, is to read ſome of the worſt. *Ogilby* and *Dryden* will ſhow You the Difference, and when You perceive the inſufferable Dulneſs of the one, You will ſee more clearly the Brightneſs of the other. Light indeed will ſhow itſelf; but a Jewel looketh brighter in a heap of Coals, than in the Luſtre of a Crown, and Beauty is more conſpicuous in the Neighbourhood of Deformity, than in the Circle of the Court.

I hope Your Lordſhip will not think I have recommended any Thing to You below Your Quality: Your Fortunes place You far above the Neceſſity of Learning, but nothing can ſet You above the Ornament of it: And I am the more bold to preſs it upon Your Lordſhip, becauſe theſe Accompliſhments appear with greater Advantages, and do really ſit more handſome-

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ly on Perſons of Quality, than any other.

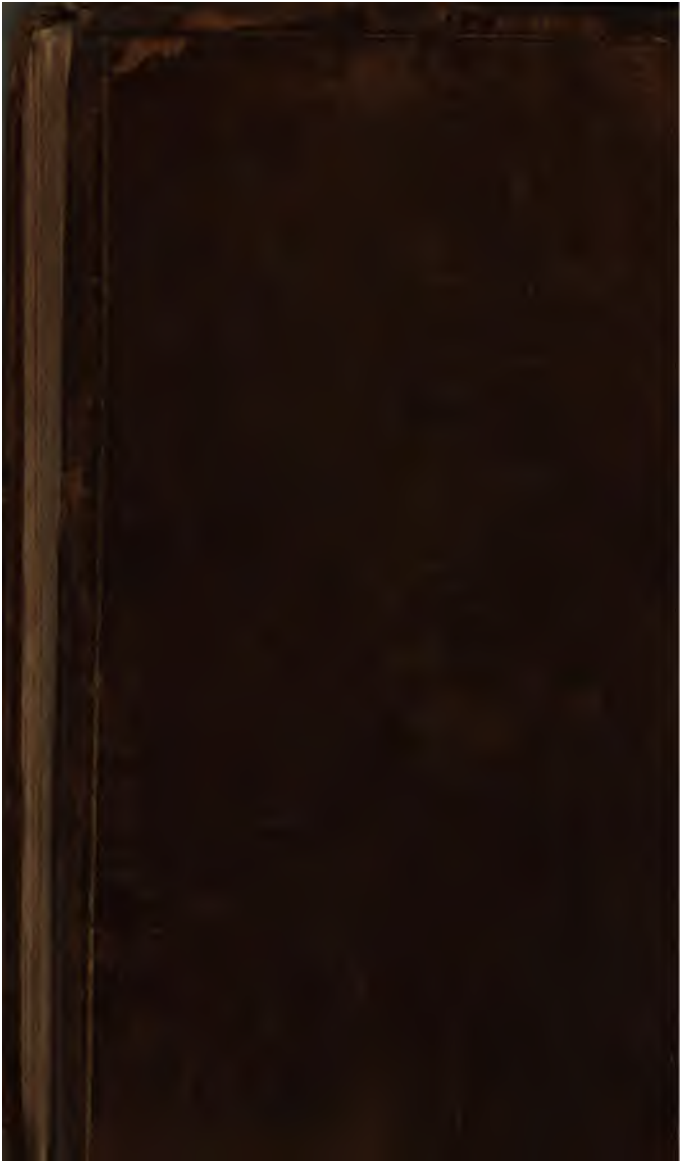
The late Duke of *Devonſhire* deſerves a Name in the foremoſt Liſt of our *Engliſh* Writers, but I reſerved him to the laſt, becauſe he was of Your Lordſhip's Alliance, and I thought his Name would better recommend what I have offered, than any Thing elſe I can ſay. He was not only the fineſt Gentleman of his Time, but one of the fineſt Scholars in every Part of polite Learning: Whatever Parts of his Character have been diſputed, this Palm hath been yielded with the greateſt Juſtice and Applauſe; and when Your Lordſhip thinks how great an Ornament he was to the *Engliſh* Court and Nation, You will find his Learning was as great an Ornament to him.

I am aſhamed to preſent theſe Thoughts in ſo ill an Hand, but Your Lordſhip will conſider that we Scholars are generally bad Penmen: We ſeldom regard the Mechanic Part of Writing, tho' nothing ſhould be put into Your Lordſhip's Hands, that looketh like ſo rude a Draught.

Such as it is, it is humbly offered to Your Lordſhip, with my conſtant Prayers for Your Proſperity; and I hope Your Lordſhip will accept it as a ſmall Teſtimony of the Honour I have for Your Illuſtrious Houſe. From,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's
Moſt humble, and
Moſt obedient Servant,

Belvoir, Dec. 29. 1710.

HENRY FELTON.